Rev. T. G. Thomas

VII — 8

THE ASCENT OF FAITH

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The Boyle Lectures

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THE ASCENT OF FAITH

OR

THE GROUNDS OF CERTAINTY IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

BY

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WITH

Grateful and Reverent Affection

TO THE

REV. W. HAY M. H. AITKEN, M.A.,

THE FOREMOST MISSION PREACHER OF OUR TIME, AND ONE OF THE CLEAREST AND MOST SYMPATHETIC THINKERS IN THE SPHERE OF CHRISTIAN EVIDENCE.

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PREFACE.

THE lecturer has been long profoundly impressed both in public discussions and private conversations, by the fact that unbelievers of all sorts and conditions manifested far more faith than they themselves had any idea of. Their unconscious certainty of some things—things about which no doubt had apparently ever entered their heads—was extremely suggestive, and led him to believe that explanatory lectures indicating the rise of faith, and of the certainty that faith brings, might prove useful. These BOYLE LECTURES begin by showing that which sceptics of all kinds believe, and then what, from their own standpoint, they ought to believe. This accomplished, it is next shown what new necessities and obligations, logical and moral, come from the step already taken ; and so forward, point by point, until the Catholic Faith in Christ is reached.

A. J. H.

LIGHTCLIFFE VICARAGE,
HALIFAX,
July 29th, 1893.

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THE FIRST SERIES.

LECTURE I.

THE SCOPE OF THE LECTURES.

1. Introduction.

My Friends,—As this is an appeal to Agnostics, our nets must be let down in deep seas. This may frighten back to the shore those of you who are afraid to be taken out of your depth. I hope, however, you will reflect that your ability to understand is proportionate to your will and faith. If you turn back, it will not be from incapacity, but from unwise want of confidence in your own intellectual power.

Agnosticism has for its positive pole essential Theism; for its negative, absolute atheism; between, there are many varieties of scepticism and freethinking. I have thus to cover a very large ground of appeal. Pray do not forget this. Else those in every part of the field may in turn imagine that I am spending time needlessly upon the others.

No one, I suppose, fancies or believes that science will ever exhaust the knowable. If this be true, the implication is significant. It is that the knowable is practically infinite. To use a well worn illustration, the known is a sphere which is continually increasing

with a continually increasing circumference of the unknown. You may, perhaps, conclude that there is here a contradiction in terms. For how can that be knowable which can never be known? Are there two kinds of unknowable? The answer, I suppose, must be "Yes." The one stands for the innumerableness of things knowable, the virtual boundlessness of the universe; the second stands for the infinity of its cause, and the impossibility of its comprehension by finite powers. In this sense the unknowable is omnipresent; it is not the circumference of the sphere; it penetrates it at every point. In everything known there is something unknown, but both the known and the unknown have their being in the so-called "unknowable."

Science is sometimes said to be a carriage only, by which we traverse the land of the knowable; not also a ship, in which we may venture on the sea of the unknowable. All such illustrations are misleading, as implying adjacent and distinct regions. The known and the unknown cannot be thus described, still less the incomprehensible, which permeates both. This permeation may be symbolised by ether, which is thought of as a kind of practically infinite physical soul of the universe, everywhere present, *i.e.*, in every atom, in all interstellar spaces, and in all living organisms, and yet distinct from all. Not simply the *uncomprehended*, but the *incomprehensible*, meets us at every point in science, and the more faithful we are to the scientific method the more profoundly we

shall feel the fact. But, as I hope to convince you later, it is best to exclude the term "unknowable" altogether. That which is not known in any sense—not even its existence, not even the evidence of its existence—cannot rightly be the subject of discussion or indeed of any statement, except that it is not an object of consciousness—either as knowing or believing. All existence about which we have the right to say anything may be thus classed: (*a*) The Incomprehensible: the indefinitely, *i.e.*, more than definitely, apprehensible, which is common to religion and science as the Omnipresent Power and its fundamental manifestations. (*b*) The Comprehensible: the definitely apprehensible which, as relating to the universe of God, is science in general; and as relating to the God of the universe, is Theology in its widest sense.

2. A Needed Distinction.

There is another point which I wish to name at once. There is, no doubt, controversial advantage to Agnosticism in demanding from the Christian that he should perpetually lay again his foundations in first principles. Now, one's intellectual conscience refuses to say that this is altogether just. To require, in religion, that one should ignore all that has been already accomplished, is to depart from the way of science. It is reasonable to say that when any doctrine or system, or interpretation of facts is newly given to the world, its promulgators ought to produce

positive evidence on its behalf, and meet as far as possible the points raised by objectors. But it seems no less reasonable to hold that when the doctrine, system, or interpretation has once become well established, positive evidence needs to be presented only as a part of ordinary education; and when objections are raised, it suffices to show, in the light of the principles and method of science, that the objections are either not well founded, or, if they are, they do not demand destruction of substance, but only modification of form. And accuracy on the part of the objector requires him not to mistake even well founded objections which are *not*, for objections which *are*, fatal. We must not suppose that to carry an outwork is to capture the citadel. The burden of proof, therefore, is to be borne by the assailants of Christianity.

3. Step by Step.

But while this is true as regards the ordinary defence of the Faith, it does not apply to the task I have in hand. I accept gladly the burden of "showing," only it must be distinctly understood what it is I undertake to show. It is simply to point out what, on the basis of that which you already take for granted, know, believe, and are, you ought to admit, perceive, hold and be. The essential principle of Agnosticism is that man cannot definitely know God, and I do not ask you to abandon that principle, but only, while retaining it, to consider

whether, and in what sense, you may and ought to become Christian Theists.

I do not forget that to many this will recall the familiar saying concerning the gift-bearing Greeks. The profession of desire to render service will be supposed by some to cover a sinister purpose. I shall be told that even St. Paul boasted afterwards to certain of his converts "being crafty, I caught you by guile." One can, I think, find in these words of St. Paul a blameless meaning; but, at least, I know I have not the skill to catch any one by guile. I speak simply as a doubter who, on certain points, has ceased to doubt, and thinks that the reasons which were weighty with him may be weighty with others. But my appeal must speak for itself; I will so put what I have to say as to facilitate the discovery of error. Besides, I will ask you to remember that straightforward dealing, no less than constant brotherliness, is required by the Master whom I have learned to love and trust, and that wilful failure in these would be treachery to Him as well as injustice to you.

4. The Subject of the Lectures.

I am to speak to you on certainty in religion, and to set it beside that which we have in science. If religion and science grow up apart above ground, their roots are in the same soil and embrace each other. My aim, therefore, is not to make peace between the two, since I do not think that they are at war—that there is even a lover's quarrel; but

I will tell you presently what my aim is. It is sometimes well that we should only find out bit by bit whither we are being led; as when one slowly climbs, with many turns, a lofty hill; catching glimpses of landscape by the way, but not knowing, scarcely guessing, what the view will prove when the far-off top is reached at last. To some it will seem better to say at once what it is they are to find at the end, that they may judge for themselves whether the outlook is likely to prove worth the climb. Where the scales are so nearly level, one may, I think, be allowed to drop into either the weight of his own wish. And my wish is to tell you plainly now where I would take you if I could. I would have every one of you not almost but altogether such as I am, except these bonds — except, that is, such weaknesses or faults as the strain of the climb may make manifest in me. I would, in a word, lead you to the heart of the Catholic Faith as it beats in the Nicene Creed. But however much I may desire this, I see clearly it is not a desire that can be satisfied in these lectures. All I can hope to do is to deal with large principles in such a way as to show that there are some things in the Catholic Faith which you already accept, and that there are other things which you ought to accept.

5. Faith in Search.

Let me say at once I strongly hope that these frank words will not turn your feet aside. To go another way, only because you do not at present like

the Catholic Faith, would not be worthy of you; for besides the question of what one likes there is the further question of what one ought to like. I am far from wishing to prejudge the point whether you ought to like the Catholic Faith or not; but of that you cannot yourselves be rightly sure until you have climbed the height from which it may be truly seen. Moreover, if you cannot, in the course of these lectures, go with me all the way, that is no reason why you should not go with me as far as you can; for is it not the mark of every true man that he will go, at all costs—be the road edged with flowers or skirted by precipices—whithersoever the twin guides of Truth and Right seem to him to lead the way? If, then, at any point it should appear to you I have myself failed to follow my guides, do you, at least, press forward, whatever may become of me. Keep this faith in Truth and Right whole and undefiled within your hearts. Surround it with a strong fortress of impregnable habit, built by invincible will. With that faith living and reigning—be he in theological opinion what he may—man is always man, and the guides he trusts will lead him where he ought to go at last. With that faith dethroned and dying, or already dead, man, whatever his theological opinions, is ceasing, or has already ceased, to be human; and if happiness in any sense can still be his, it is but the happiness of the beast that slowly grazes with his head to the ground.

6. Mistakes as to the Catholic Faith.

Many of you seem to think that it is of the essence of the Catholic Faith to say that the man of noblest devotion to truth and right will without doubt perish everlastingly, unless he is able to include within his theological convictions that particular presentation of the Catholic Faith set forth in the Athanasian Creed. My brothers, do not believe it. I will deal with you on this, as on every point, with utter frankness. I admit at once that the threatening clauses in that Creed, *if they must be taken in the sense in which they are understood by you*, go far to make good the charge you bring against us that, while those awful words remain where they are, our invitation to inquiry is at once a mockery and an insult. But I do not so understand them. I cannot, of course, speak for the exact sense in which they were intended by their unknown author, but the meaning in which they are accepted by the Catholic Church, as distinguished from this or that party within her fold, seems to me clear enough. On two points there is, practically, complete agreement. The first is that these words are to be no otherwise understood than are the related passages in the teaching of Christ. The second is that, whether in the Creed or the Bible, the reference is not to unconscious error of intellect, but to wilful perversion of belief. I cannot say that Catholics have always been as ready as they ought to have been to recognise purity of motive on the

part of their opponents, and they have probably often been mistaken in the application of their principle to individuals—to say nothing of the fact that catholicity of creed is not, as it ought to be, always accompanied by catholicity of love. But the principle itself is unmistakably right. The one damning sin, the essence of all criminality, that which by inviolable law brings perdition in its train, is that preference for acknowledged evil, that indifference to acknowledged good, which has its source and its secret in the will not to be true and right. For all time the law must abide—"This is the condemnation, that men love darkness rather than light."

Let us now state the case in another way. We have seen that those who remain false, not by accidental error but by deliberate purpose, to the twin guides of truth and right must perish. What shall we say of those sincere souls whose devotion to these guides never fails or falters, but who have not yet reached the Catholic Faith? I think the Church answers with one voice:—They will some day reach it. To doubt this is to doubt either truth and right themselves, which were an infamy, or to lose confidence in the Catholic Faith as true and right which would be, to those who had once possessed it, perhaps the greatest evil of its kind it is possible to conceive. For if that faith be what I think it is, to lose it would be to lose, it might be slowly but yet most surely, the consciousness of God as the God of Love. I know that the expression of my belief that you who

are dominantly sincere souls, seeking with steadfast will, and embracing in proportion as you find, the truth, will one day here or hereafter reach the Catholic Faith, may, according to your temperament, call to your face a frown or a smile. You will think that I too am prejudging the whole question in taking it for granted that the result of your inquiries will be the same as my own. But I think, my brothers, we are here in the presence of a law which cannot be escaped. It is everywhere the condition of earnest pleading that the pleader should himself believe with a whole heart in that for which he pleads. To merely say, in general terms, that he who is a persistent and whole-hearted seeker for truth will find, is not a very useful form of statement, and is one which, in many cases, would not be supported by an appeal to external experience. My confidence that you will ultimately come to the Faith for which I plead is a part of my confidence in God. Whatever your present belief or unbelief, you and I are guided by the same Divine Spirit in so far as we will to live the truth we learn.

It must, however, be admitted that during the greater part of the last three hundred years there has been no small excuse for those English unbelievers who have thought themselves justified in looking upon the Bible as a book of which every word must be accepted as Divine, or none at all. For it can hardly be questioned that during that time many prominent theologians, and a large proportion of the ministers of religion, have set forth what is called verbal inspira-

tion not only as the true theory, but also as a fact without belief in which salvation would be, if not impossible, at least extremely doubtful. Now, I agree at once that all such ways of putting the case are wrong. You ought to submit to no restriction, except the obligation to believe, after due application of the method of science, only what is seen to be true, to approve only what is seen to be right. But for this very reason, you cannot scientifically put forward as ground for *unbelief in Christ* the fact that there is much in the Bible you are at present unable to accept.

It must, also, be conceded that with respect to atheism, a similar excuse may be found. Some theologians and many preachers have presented the position of Theists in a way that the scientific inquirer could not accept. They have practically said: "If you do not believe in God exactly as we do, you must be an atheist." And inquirers have rashly taken them at their word. Finding, as they thought, the presented arguments insufficient, they, instead of studying the whole question for themselves, wrongly concluded that atheism was the only thing left. But here again adhesion to the principles and method of science would have shown that no such conclusion could be scientifically justified. Only those objections which are fatal to belief in God—not those which are fatal to this or that mode of presentation—can be considered valid from a scientific point of view.

7. The Communication of Truth.

There is another point, of which I trust you will not make too much. It must be that they who have any truth which others have not should appear to imply on that point a certain superiority which those others may resent. Who are you, that you should set yourself up to teach us? is the cry of this kind of pride. Many of you, I am quite sure, will see at once the folly and wrong of such a spirit as this, but others may need a word of explanation. Whether you are Evolutionists or not, you will grant, as a matter of fact, that the nations and races of the world are in different stages of progress. You will also grant, as a matter of fact, that some men have truth which others have not. The question arises, how are these to regard themselves? If they simply pride themselves on the possession of intellectual wealth which they would contemptuously refuse to share with any out of their own set, it is impossible not to regard their attitude with a certain resentment, and with the feeling that pride of intellect is in its own way as real a hindrance to greatness as is pride of purse. But if a man modestly and humbly hold, as he ought, that if he possess any truth unpossessed by others he is but the trustee of a treasure which belongs to them as really as to him, there is, I think, no room for resentment, or for any feeling but pleasure that the man should so plainly recognise his duty. In like manner, in so far as the Church has in her long his-

tory shown pride or arrogance to those that are without, so far as she has sought to be served rather than to serve, so far as she has selfishly enjoyed the truths of which she is the trustee instead of being the joyful bearer of the good news to the whole world, she has failed in her function and her mission. But the mere fact that she professes to have given to the world truths which the world could not otherwise have had, is no rational ground for opposition or anger. May I, then, venture to hope that you will listen, as far as possible without prejudice, to these lectures, which seek to help you to remove out of your path such difficulties as can be taken away, and to surmount those which cannot. If it be an impertinence to offer you aid which hitherto you have not asked, or even desired, then let me ask you whether you do not yourselves display the same quality? For is it not true of you that it is not pride alone, nor, I trust, chiefly, that has caused your attitude of resolute revolt? Is there not on your part, also, an honest belief that in seeking to un-Christianise the Church you are really helpers of men who, up to the present, have not sought or desired any such service? I think you will agree with me that in communicating to the world the truth we believe ourselves to possess, there is no proper place for pride either on your part or upon ours.

I may add that you will hear from my lips no conscious misrepresentation either of yourselves or of your convictions. But long study of your literature, and frequent contact with all classes of sceptics,

have produced in me the profound conviction that there is in all varieties of unbelievers much more tendency to the Catholic Faith than they themselves suspect, and I would fain aid them to realise why this tendency exists and what it means. No man is without belief of some kind, and every belief has certain implications which may be very profitably worked out. The line which I propose to pursue is simply to take those beliefs about whose validity you are surest, and to ascertain whether the grounds on which your present scientific and religious convictions repose do not justify or even demand the ascent of your thought stage by stage until you reach that height from which the Catholic Faith may be embraced in a series of interdependent views.

8. Summary.

1. It is certain that every one believes something.

2. It is extremely probable that every one believes something that is not true.

3. It is extremely probable that every one omits something that is true.

4. It is agreed that there is a proportion in things, and that some beliefs, as compared with others, are very important.

5. It is eminently desirable to examine ourselves as to whether our more important beliefs are well founded.

6. It is eminently desirable to examine ourselves

as to whether we have omitted from our beliefs important things which are true.

7. In considering the claims of any "belief" we are under obligation not to accept or reject from like or dislike of the quarter from which it comes to us.

8. In considering what is said against any belief, we are under obligation to distinguish objections which are, from those which are not, fatal.

It is certainly our duty to do what we can to make sure that the beliefs we hold are well founded, and that we have omitted nothing important which we ought to believe.

LECTURE II.

CLASSES OF AGNOSTICS ADDRESSED.

1. The Main Question.

The last lecture stated the object in view, and the steps by which I hope to reach it. We have now to describe the classes of Agnostics I have in my mind, and to justify the classification given. But first let me say that to the Agnostic of every class the deepest and most important question is, whether he ought to believe in God and Christ at all; and he knows that, were it proved that two-thirds of the books of the Bible were unhistorical, such proof would not justify unbelief in Christ; and that, were the assaults directed against the Theism of theologians successful, that success would not necessitate unbelief in God; unless faith in Christ as the manifestation of God and faith in God as manifested, were proved to be against those principles which are the recognised guides of true thought and right action. The occasional gibes one hears about truth and right themselves do not require serious notice. The unbeliever who cannot show that his unbelief is justified by truth and right throws up his case.

The hatred with which some regard "religion" is more intelligible than justifiable. I grant that many authors, with whose writings you are familiar, have made out strong cases in support of the contention that there have blended with historical Christianity certain elements of evil which have tended to corrupt or poison the springs of human progress. But it has not yet been shown that the evil is traceable to the Christianity, or that the absence of the latter would have involved the absence of the former. On the contrary, it would not be difficult to show from the writings of men whom you hold in honour, that, in their view, whether its origin be "natural" or "supernatural," Christianity is still the greatest and most beneficent of all the moral forces recognised by man. Surely, then, your right course would be not to reject, but to examine Christianity for yourselves, ascertaining how much, as I have said, you already accept, and how much more you ought to accept.

2. Catholics and Agnostics.

It would be very convenient to class all those who are not Catholics as Agnostics. If the terms Catholic and Agnostic could be used simply to indicate a distinction of fact, not as implying praise of the one or blame of the other, the classification would be useful. Of course, from this point of view, the term Agnostic would include all varieties, from non-Catholic Christians to Atheists. Thus the Denominationalist is an Agnostic as regards the Catholic doctrine of Unity,

the Scripturist is an Agnostic touching the Catholic principle of the practical infallibility of the Church, the Unitarian is an Agnostic with respect to the Catholic doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, the Deists are Agnostics with reference to the Catholic doctrine of Divine revelation, the Positivist is an Agnostic in his opposition to the Catholic doctrine that man *can* know God, the Atheist is an Agnostic in his opposition to the Catholic doctrine that men *do* know God. The Agnostic of Mr. Spencer's type is not necessarily opposed to the Catholic Faith in anything except, perhaps, in what looks like a denial of moral freedom. All else is but failure to carry out legitimately the principles professed. A like remark may be made of Theosophy, so far as it is intelligible. But though convenient, this classification would be unjust. To characterise men by their denials only is not to represent them truly. Yet it may be used simply to show that the controversy turns on the denials.

3. Agnostic Atheists.

I use the words of this sub-title with some hesitation. The reason is that many of you will resent, with natural indignation, the joining of the two terms "Agnostic" and "Atheist." As you not only admit, but positively teach, that there is an Omnipresent Being, the Cause of all Phenomena, you will hold me guilty of inexcusable bigotry in failing to recognise the distinction between saying "God cannot be definitely known," and saying "There is no God."

Nevertheless, I hope to convince you that there is good reason for what I have done. You will admit that one must follow the use of the word Agnostic rather than its meaning. You do not, yourselves, adhere to its literal signification.

(1) You do not mean that you have no knowledge, but only no knowledge of God.

(2) You do not mean that you have no knowledge of God in the sense of no consciousness of Him, but only in the sense of no definite consciousness.

(3) You do not mean that there ought to be no belief in Him, but only that we are not scientifically justified in formulating belief into a creed.

Now as you do not yourselves adhere to the literal meaning of the name, you can scarcely be surprised that others follow your example, though the extension they give to the term be not acceptable to you. And some of these others—the Positivists, for instance, plead that they are better entitled than you to the name Agnostic. For you, they say, admit that we know, or justifiably believe, God is, though we are not entitled to say we definitely know or definitely believe. But they maintain that we do not know, and are not entitled to believe, so much as that. Their contention is that man has no faculties either to know that God is, or to know that God is not ; it is, they think, altogether outside of the range of human consciousness, and is as meaningless to them as would be the assertion Blank is, or Blank is not. I do not, for my own part, admit that they are,

on their own statement, as much entitled to the use of the word as are those who simply mean by it the absence of knowledge, whereas they assert the impossibility of knowledge; and I am quite sure they believe in an Omnipresent Power or Being as really as you. Nevertheless, as they call themselves Agnostics, I have no choice but to recognise the name as a name.

4. Justification of the Term.

But, besides you, who admit an indefinite consciousness of God, besides the Positivists, who deny any consciousness of God, besides the Secularists, who profess to ignore the whole subject, there are those who formerly called themselves Atheists, but now call themselves Agnostics, and, as they think, with the best claim of all. For, say they, those who admit any Divine existence are really Theists; those who assert that God, if God there be, cannot be known, are really anti-Gnostics; but "we do not say, There is no God; this we say, We know not." We are, therefore, entitled, in the true sense of the word, to call ourselves Agnostics. To many, I admit, this kind of Atheism will seem new. They have been accustomed to regard Atheism and anti-Theism as the same thing, the Atheist and the anti-Theist as the same person; and it will be a surprise to find that the proportion of those who say "there is no God" to those who say "I know not" is scarcely one to a hundred. The fact is, however, as here stated,

and the claim of these "Atheists" to call themselves Agnostics can hardly be denied.

As the term covers more than one class, it is necessary in some way to distinguish. Those who say there is no God need not be taken into account. It is a statement which in its own nature is insusceptible of proof. It would require a God to prove that God is not. Neither can consciousness be cited. It is impossible to be conscious of nothingness. No one can say truly I am conscious God is not. He may, perhaps, say I am not conscious that God is, *i.e.*, what you call God, though he is conscious of that which is believed to be the Omnipresent Power. Besides, though the Atheist is not necessarily an anti-Theist, the anti-Theist is necessarily an Atheist, and, therefore, whatever tends to remove Atheism will tend to remove anti-Theism. In like manner we need not take into account the anti-Gnostic. Though the Agnostic is not necessarily an anti-Gnostic, the anti-Gnostic is necessarily an Agnostic, and whatever tends to remove Agnosticism will tend to remove anti-Gnosticism. A sufficient distinction will therefore be found in the following:— Let Agnostic Theism stand for that kind of Agnosticism which admits a Divine existence; Agnostic Atheism for that kind of Agnosticism which thinks it does not. At present we are concerned with the latter only.

5. Atheistic Theists and Theistic Atheists.

But here at once we are confronted with a difficulty of stupendous proportions, one which cannot be removed by any merely intellectual effort, but can only be reduced by increasing purity of life. Logically, it arises from cross-division; practically, from confusion of character. The cross-division may be corrected by careful statement, but the confusion of character only by sanctification of life. The fact, miserable or blessed, according to our standpoint, but always of awful significance, is that in the majority of cases the Atheist and the Theist are not two but one. The common oblivion of this fact has left the way open for incalculable mischief. The part-Theist forgetting that he is also part-Atheist, passes by all that is said about the wrong of unbelief in God, as having no relation to him. And yet how grievous it is! No man is competent to deal with Atheism in another except as he has overcome, or, at least, is overcoming, the Atheism in himself. We are all, in this land, organically Theists, but the chief practical matter is to be ethically Theists also. The truth is, there is a really fearful forgetfulness of what ethical Theism means, and this forgetfulness tends to errors of the most fatal description. It is belief in God, the absolutely Good, it is belief which takes God into account in everything, and constantly tends to make us like Him in Whom we believe. Its moral expression is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all

thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself.

It is clear that he who does not love God supremely and man proportionately is ethically more an Atheist than a Theist. If, then, it should be true that the majority of "Christians" do not thus love God and man, then they are manifestly more Atheistic than Theistic. But, unhappily, this, though the true, is not the usual standard. Speaking broadly, it is assumed that those who go to church are religious, and those who stay away are not religious. But if you press the question, Are all those who go to church Theists in the sense above described? the answer will be given, not without wonder—perhaps amused wonder—that any one should be ignorant enough to ask it, No. Regarding a Christian as one who is in a certain organic relation to Christ, I do not mean by the term one who lives as a Christian ought, any more than I mean by the term son, a good son. In its ethical sense he alone is a Christian who has become Christ-like; in its organic sense he is a Christian who is placed in a position to become Christ-like. It is, therefore, possible for a Christian so understood to be an infidel; indeed, infidel Christians are fearfully numerous.

Here we have the explanation of a common difficulty. Men, justly condemned for various crimes, usually return themselves as Christians of various types, and those who are hostile to Christianity are

fond of pointing to this fact as a strong argument against belief in God and Christ. But this would be impossible if the objectors would only bear in mind the distinction between the organic and the ethical meanings of the word. If they did, they would see at once that the criminality of these Christians was proof that they did not believe in the ethical sense which carries with it love to God and man, for such could knowingly work no ill. It is more necessary still to remember this distinction with respect to those criminals whom State law cannot reach, and those evil livers against whom no State law has been directed. It is absurd to deny that men who are baptised into, brought up in, and voluntarily remain in connection with the Church, even though their lives are mean, base, selfish, cruel, vicious, criminal, are organically Christians ; but it is not absurd to say —it is on the contrary literally true to say—that they are ethically Atheists.

6. Unconscious Theists and Unconscious Atheists.

No one can believe in good, in the sense of loving IT supremely and man as himself, without being more a Theist than an Atheist, even though his Theism be unconscious. I have known a few—not many—self-called Atheists who seemed to me to be better men, to live better lives than the great majority of organic Christians, but then I should never dream of calling these men more than part-Atheists. Con-

scious belief or unbelief is not the only principle of naming. The standard is not so much how man regards God, as it is how God regards man. From this standpoint every one who lives, voluntarily, a good life is a Theist, even if he is wholly unconscious of his relation to God ; every one who lives, voluntarily, a bad life, is an Atheist, even though he is conscious that he lives, and moves, and has his being in God.

I admit, then, that a man may be a member of the Divine family, may be a member of the Christian family, as he may be a member of any human family, and yet be selfish, mean, base, cruel, vicious, criminal. But I must ask you to consider for what purpose he is a member, why it is that he is placed in surroundings and under influences so unlike what the man is? He is so placed that his criminality, viciousness, cruelty, baseness, meanness, selfishness, may disappear, and that lawfulness, virtue, mercy, nobleness, magnanimity, unselfishness may spring to birth and life, and grow in power and fulness instead. I grant that the purpose may be defeated, but that that is the purpose cannot surely be questioned by any open-minded reader of the New Testament. It is only fair, besides, to remember human weakness, and to take into account not only what men are, but also what they are becoming.

You will see then what I mean by saying that a man may be organically a Christian, and ethically an Atheist. I do not suppose that this explanation will

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satisfy you that I am right in regarding every man who voluntarily lives a good life as being, both organically and ethically, even though it be unconsciously, a Theist; but that was not my object. I simply wished to make it clear why I cannot call him an Atheist; and that I am not simply playing with words when I speak of unconscious Theism. For I, as recognising the authority of Christ, must regard the question in the light of His words. And His own words render it certain that He regards every man who does good, however unconscious of Him in doing it, as "having done it unto Him."

7. The Question Eminently Practical.

But why, then, you may ask, trouble us with the question of Theism at all? Why not, if you admit that we may, without being conscious Theists, believe in good and act on our belief, leave us to work out our problem of life for ourselves? Let me ask you in return whether I have the right to do that. Concious faith in and love of God, as the absolutely Good, can not only make you no worse, but must make you better. Have I then the right to be silent? Even as a matter of intellectual conviction it is surely well that thought should correspond with fact. And if it be that God, the absolutely Good, *is*, this response to the fact must tell as an inspiring and animating force on the conscience, the affections and the will.

What do you mean by conscience? you, perhaps, impatiently exclaim. I simply mean the mind re-

cognising relations of right, as by reason I mean the mind recognising the relations of truth. In fact, there is no ground for imagining essentially different faculties, nor, for that matter, essentially different relations. Truth may be regarded as right within the sphere of intelligence ; Right may be regarded as truth within the sphere of morals. The ideas of both are ultimate, and cannot be reduced to anything simpler than themselves. To think, feel, will, act truly and rightly with respect to man and God—if you admit the Divine existence, and that thought, feeling, volition and action can have any quality of truth and right towards Him—you would regard as a moral obligation, obedience to which you would regard as virtuous, disobedience as vicious—the one as involving beneficial, the other injurious results. Conscious Theism, therefore, if it take the form of supreme love to God—the Absolutely Good—and proportionate love to man, must have an immense practical effect on life. In addition to this, you must remember that, if God exist, the duties we owe to Him cannot depend on our belief or unbelief in His existence. What we owe, we owe ; and no change of opinion can abolish the debt. I grant that if the question were, what so many Atheists think it, merely speculative, it would be comparatively unimportant how we settled it. But it may well startle the thoughtful Atheist to reflect that if, after all, God is, he has neglected and still neglects the duties owing to God. The question is therefore eminently practi-

cal. I do not attempt to "demonstrate" the Divine existence. That would be to assume what I do not admit—that you have no consciousness of the Being whom I call God. You will see, as we go on, the position I take. No one, I believe, really doubts that there is one Power manifest in the Universe, and the real question is how that Power is to be interpreted.

In the sense, therefore, of unbelief in the One power there are, I think, no Atheists. The difficulty that many have is one really of imagination. They feel the emptiness of space—a feeling they think they could not have were God there. But science unites with religion in correcting this feeling. It is certain now that space is full of force and movement, that the Power manifest in all phenomena is vividly present in the interstellar spaces as well as in the stars themselves. I repeat, the question is, How is this Power to be interpreted? If as Unconscious Being in eternal unmoral and irresistible movement to whom we owe no obedience (since disobedience itself, were it possible, would be its own product), to whose indifferent energy we must attribute alike all that we honour as virtue, and all that we condemn as vice; all that has been loved as true, and all that has been hated as false; all that has won wondering gladness as beauty, and all from which we have turned away as vile; all that religion has reverenced as holy, and all in which irreligion has revelled as profane; then, it is impossible to deny that such an interpretation must affect human inclination, passion, and conduct. Once more, there-

fore, the question is eminently practical. And that question again is, How shall we interpret God? According to this description? Or—according to Christ?

Then, there is the question not only of sin and guilt but also of, at least, partial moral impotence. I know that many of you think that Christianity stands or falls with what you suppose to be the Catholic doctrine of our relation to Adam. For my own part, I cannot for an instant admit that Christianity depends on the literal truth of the Adamic story. What the right interpretation of that story may be I will not discuss, simply because I have not a doubt as to the main fact that we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. The race needs a redeemer because the race has sinned; the individual needs a redeemer because the individual has sinned. What I am concerned with at present is to show the immense practical importance, not only of conscious Theism, but also of the kind of Theism of which you are conscious. It cannot but make an almost infinite difference to you whether you do or do not regard God as a Being against whom you have sinned, and yourself as one who needs forgiveness and help. A Theism which does nothing towards making us strong to overcome, which has no voice of love and no gift of grace, may be true as far as it goes, but it must fall short of any practical effect in the case of those who feel the need to pray. The Theism that is not dynamic, that can say nothing of spiritual energy

passing into the will weakened by sin, must be at the best but as the cold light of stars in comparison with the sunshine in whose presence and by whose power flower and fruit spring to life. The question therefore touches all you hold most dear. It is a question of trust vanquishing doubt, of hope overcoming despair, of love casting out hate and fear. You may, perhaps, deny that any Theism has ever done this, or ever can do it, for the masses of men. I do not wonder at the denial, for no Theism has done this yet for mankind at large. But Christian Theism is doing it, and it will do it faster if you will help. At least for Western nations the one question is—How is the Omnipresent Power to be interpreted? And there is no other question of such intense interest or of such practical importance.

8. Summary.

1. It is certain that the question of Theism is not one of belief alone.

2. Organic Theism stands for what may be called the organic relations of man to God.

3. In the organic sense of the word, all men are Theists, even those who call themselves Atheists; just as all Englishmen are Englishmen, even those who depart from their native land and dwell among foreigners.

4. There is, also, Ethical Theism, which is life in harmony with our relations to God.

5. Ethical Theism, like Organic, may be, and

occasionally is, unconscious ; *i.e.*, a man may be good without having recognised that God is the source of his goodness.

6. The question of Ethical Theism is not, "What is the good of believing in God?" or, "Since everything is governed by law, would not the universe go on the same if there were no God?"—but, "What obligations and duties arise out of the relations between God and man?"

It is certain that the practical question for me is: Ought I to interpret the Omnipresent Power in an ethical sense? and, if so, how ought this interpretation to be applied to my every-day life?

LECTURE III.

THE NATURE OF EVIDENCE.

1. Introduction.

In a future lecture I hope to call close attention to the fact that faith in the principle of causality, which no one attempts to prove, which every one takes for granted, is the basal certainty of science as well as of Theism. But it seems desirable to consider first the faith in laws of evidence, without which there could be no rational certainty at all. The laws which are generally accepted owe their acceptance to the fact that they are perceived to be special cases of that faith in truth and right without which science and religion could have no existence. But we must be careful to distinguish these laws from inferences professing to be based upon them.

2. Certainty and Probability.

Every one is familiar with Butler's famous saying that probability is the guide of life—an idea implied in what Aristotle says of the duty of a judge to take into account not only positive proofs, but also probabilities. In his great argument from analogy

Butler says that, "from the natural constitution and course of things, we must, in our temporal concerns, almost continually, and in matters of great consequence, act upon evidence of a like kind and degree to the evidence of religion." Thus, also, Locke, Newman, and Jevons, as quoted by Mr. Loraine, in his very useful "Battle of Belief":—"Our knowledge," says Locke, "being very narrow, and we not happy enough to find certain truth in everything which we have occasion to consider, most of the propositions we think, reason, discourse, nay, act upon, are such as we cannot have undoubted knowledge of their truth. Yet some of them border so near upon certainty that we make no doubt at all about them, but assent to them as firmly, and act according to that assent as resolutely as if they were infallibly demonstrated, and that our knowledge of them was perfect and certain."

In his "Grammar of Assent," Cardinal Newman has shown that it is not by fixed logical methods and the process of formal reasoning that we attain to certitude, but "from the constitution of the human mind, certitude is the result of arguments which, taken in their letter, and not in their full implicit sense, are but probabilities."

In his "Treatise on Logic and the Scientific Method," Professor W. Stanley Jevons says, "No inductive conclusions are more than probable, and I adopt the opinion that the theory of probability is an essential part of logical method, so that the logical value of every inductive result must be determined,

consciously or unconsciously, according to the principles of the inverse method of probability."

Again, he says the theory of probability is "the necessary basis of nearly all the judgments and decisions we make in the prosecution of science, or the conduct of ordinary affairs. . . . All our inferences concerning the future are merely probable, and a due appreciation of the degree of probability depends entirely on a due comprehension of the principles of the subject. I conceive that it is impossible even to expound the principles and methods of induction as applied to natural phenomena without resting them upon the theory of probability." Further, the Professor contends, "In spite of its immense difficulty of application, and the aspersions which have been mistakenly cast upon it, the theory of probabilities, I repeat, is the noblest, as it will in course of time prove perhaps the most fruitful branch of mathematical science. It is the very guide of life, and hardly can we take a step or make a decision of any kind without correctly or incorrectly making an estimation of probabilities. . . . The whole cogency of inductive reasoning, as applied to science, rests on probability." To this may be added the remark of Mr. Gladstone that the question of religion "is of all other questions the one upon which those who have not a conclusion available for use are most nexorably bound to seek for one. And, by further consequence, it is also the question to which the duty of following affirmative evidence, even though it

should present to the mind no more than a probable character, and should not, *ab initio*, or even thereafter, extinguish doubt, has the closest and most stringent application."

3. Foundation and Superstructure.

What is here said of probability must not be regarded as equivalent to the admission that we have probability only. There are, no doubt, probabilities that amount to practical certainties, but there are also, as we have seen in previous lectures, certainties without which probabilities would have no foundation to rest upon. What we are concerned with at present is the feeling of certainty that accompanies the perception that the conclusion reached is justified by the laws of evidence, these laws themselves being dependent for their justification on their agreement with our fundamental intuitions of truth and right.

4. Misapprehension of Evidence.

Unfamiliarity with the method of science is of itself sufficient to account for much of the uncertainty with which religion is regarded. When attention is concentrated on difficulties truth is unconsciously ignored Were the same system pursued in science, there would soon be no science to pursue. It would be well if each of us asked himself, What kind and amount of evidence ought I to demand in order to justify faith in the God of Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ Himself as He really lived and taught? The question ought

not to be, How much evidence and of what kind should I like to have? If put in that way, it is possible to reach a condition in which no evidence would satisfy. In thought, as in conduct, let justice rule.

5. Kinds of Evidence.

I may remind you that the object of evidence is to produce just conviction as to the truth or untruth of a statement made, and must therefore vary in its character as the statement varies. Thus the distinctions of space and time, matter and motion, are logical distinctions—*i.e.*, distinctions of kind or quality. Those of magnitudes of all kinds are mathematical distinctions, distinctions of quantity or number. Both of the implied sciences, logic and mathematics, are called abstract in the sense that qualitative and quantitative relations—without reference to any particular things of which they are relations—are alone thought of; or, what means the same thing, statements made about them would be equally true or untrue in whatever things these relations were found. Thus, if I say A is like or unlike B in quality, the statement is true or false whatever A or B represents. And if I assert that A is like or unlike B in quantity, the assertion is true or false whatever A or B stands for. Logical Evidence, therefore, is evidence which agrees with the laws of qualitative relations. Mathematical Evidence is evidence which agrees with the laws of quantitative relations. But though the one or the other is applic-

able to all things about which we can assert either quality or quantity, neither is what may be called Real Evidence—that is to say, they cannot themselves show that any alleged being really exists, or that any alleged event actually occurs, unless, indeed, there be an acknowledged effect whose cause has to be inferred. Neither logic nor mathematics, therefore, can of itself show the existence of God or of Christ, of the material or of the spiritual universe, or of anything at all. It follows, of course, that we can ask for logical or mathematical evidence on behalf of Christianity only in the sense that the Real Evidence for God and Christ must be interpreted in harmony with these sciences, in so far as Theism and Christianity present qualitative and quantitative relations.

The next department of science relates to Force as exhibited in matter and motion. It is called Mechanics, in the widest meaning of the word. It is still abstract in the sense that it relates to force in whatever quality or quantity of matter it is manifested —*i.e.*, there are certain laws which hold universally true. But it is also concrete, for the laws have special applications, varying as the matter is in mass or molecule, in equilibrium or in non-equilibrium. The science of mechanics must, however, be logical and mathematical in the sense that it must be in harmony with the laws of qualitative and quantitative relations. Mechanics may, in fact, be called the science of the qualitative and quantitative relations of Force exhibited in matter and motion. But as we must have

relations before they are classified, so must we have relations of force before these are classified. And, of course, their science could not exist if we had no consciousness of relation and force. It is to consciousness, then, we must appeal for Real Evidence. And were any one to demand Mechanical Evidence for God and Christ, all that he could, without absurdity, mean would be that the real evidence should not be in antagonism to the Laws of Force, or should be in harmony therewith so far as Theism and Christianity presented relations of force.

The next department of science, while governed still by the laws of relations and the laws of force, is concrete in the sense that it deals with existences as they have been, are, and are becoming. You will remember that so-called spirit is as really concrete as so-called body, and concrete science therefore includes the "spiritual" as well as the "material." It includes the laws of all movements or actions, material or spiritual, actually going on, whether in the heavens (astronomy) or in the earth (geology in the widest sense); in life (biology), in mind (psychology), or in society (sociology). All these have relations of quality, quantity, and force, and therefore their sciences must be in harmony with logic, mathematics, and mechanics, but their real evidence belongs simply to the sphere of the concrete.

6. Real Evidence.

Thus, then, the evidence for Christianity belongs to logic, mathematics, mechanics, astronomy, geology, biology, psychology, sociology, in very varying degrees, but only, in any of them, to the extent in which it involves questions touching relations of quality, quantity, force, motion, life, mind, society. In the nature of the case it is related chiefly to the last three, but of course its real evidence is not furnished by them. It cannot be too distinctly borne in mind that science is powerless until it has obtained its facts. Once these are given, it is immediately operative ; but the facts themselves must be furnished by experience. It is reasonable to demand scientific evidence for conclusions, theories, doctrines ; but the evidence for facts, as facts, must be that of experience. Before you can have astronomy you must have your stars ; it is not on astronomical evidence that we say stars exist. Before you have botany you must have flowers ; it is not, then, on botanical evidence that we say flowers exist. In order to have any science relating to God and Christ, there must be experience of God and Christ ; and the only sense in which it can be rightly demanded that Christian evidence shall be scientific is not that the evidence shall be furnished by science, but that the evidence furnished by experience shall not be "contrary to law."

7. Laws of Evidence.

In the acquisition of knowledge the first thing is (*a*)—Experience as Personal Observation. Thus, theology must be meaningless to those who think they have no experience of God. But the word experience must not be interpreted too narrowly; must not be confined to the sensible, else would science, which includes the supersensible, be shut out. Experience of the sensible is accompanied by experience of the conviction that the sensible must have a non-sensible cause, and when this is "worked out" we have experience of the conviction that the ultimate cause of all is God. I do not doubt that we have spiritual experience more direct than this, but I do not wish to raise that point at present. But as regards religious phenomena in general, it will be admitted that we ought to ascertain (1) What they really are; (2) What conditions are necessary to their existence; (3) What is their connection; (4) To what causes they ought to be attributed. And no one surely will deny that the state of mind of the observer counts for something. The ideal observer is one who—(1) Is free from mental disturbance, prejudice, or partiality; (2) is bent on knowing the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth; (3) is able to clearly distinguish necessary from adventitious parts; (4) is capable of recognising and keeping in mind the relations of each part to the whole, and the relations of each whole to a larger whole. And as regards any theories

formed, he will—(1) Be sure of his facts; (2) be sure that he has facts enough; (3) be sure that his theory is not contradicted by other theories of whose truth he is certain; (4) be sure that his theory fits the facts.

(*b*)—Experience as Testimony of Others. As we all know, the sphere of personal observation is very limited, and, if we shut out the testimony of others, the facts obtained by any individual experience, if they furnished materials for a science at all, would be available only for the individual observer, and would be of no use to any one else. It is necessary to science to take the facts adduced by multitudes of observers, but, for this very reason, we must subject testimony to adequate examination on recognised principles. (1) The thing alleged must be possible. Before, however, we are entitled to declare it impossible, we must have shown that its admission would involve contradiction of the established laws of Nature, or of the necessary laws of mind. Its being 'out of" ordinary experience may be good reason for regarding it as improbable, not for regarding it as impossible. (2) The testimony must not be essentially self-contradictory, whether given by one person or several. To establish a violation of this rule it must be shown that in crucial points the evidence does not agree with itself, or that equally trustworthy witnesses contradict each other. But inconsistencies in details would not violate the rule unless the details were the points to be proved. (3) The trustworthi-

ness of witnesses as to honesty is to be presumed in proportion as the love of truth is present, as motive to falsehood is absent, and as deviations from the truth would be likely to be discovered. (4) The trustworthiness of a witness as to competency must be presumed in proportion as the alleged facts were within his powers of observation and recollection. It is important to distinguish between testimony as to facts and interpretation of facts. For example, the events called miracles are described in the Gospels as facts; and the competency of the witnesses concerning them is not in the smallest degree affected by how those facts are to be interpreted Hence it is absurd to complain that the witnesses were not scientific men. In history at large not one witness in ten thousand ever was or probably ever will be a "scientific" witness. Events will not wait for the application of scientific apparatus. Let men of science interpret the facts; ordinary men are competent enough, if honest, to testify as to such facts as the so-called miracles of the New Testament.

(*c*)—Experience as Recorded Testimony. In estimating the value of written testimony we are to distinguish between criticism of the text and interpretation of the work. (1) Criticism as to authenticity as a whole or in parts, if based on internal grounds, can only be negatively used. For example, general resemblance of style and harmony of matter would not prove the work authentic; but striking

dissimilarity of style would render it likely, and disagreement of contents would render it almost certain and, of course, evidence of its originating at a later date would make it absolutely certain, that it was not authentic. (2) Criticism of authenticity as a whole or in parts, if based on external grounds, inquires whether the writing in question is attributed to or quoted as from the alleged author by other writers living soon after, or about the same time, or by the alleged author himself in works of his that are not called in question. (3) Interpretation of works, as much as evidence of facts, demands trustworthiness as to honesty and as to competency. Honesty being presumed, competency is in proportion to the interpreter's capacity, knowledge of the writer's language, familiarity with the writer's subjects, acquaintance with the writer's character and life, and comprehension of the characteristic features of the age in which the writer lived. (4) Interpretation must assume that the words to be interpreted have only one predominant meaning. One must, therefore, endeavour to find what that meaning is. It is to be remembered that in the nature of language the same words cannot always be used in the same sense; and in any particular case we must endeavour to ascertain the sense in which they are there and then used.[1]

Let me now give you a summary in such form as I should use for myself.

[1] For these rules I am largely indebted to Sir Wm. Hamilton's "Methodology."

8. Summary.

(1) I ought to be faithful to the things I hold to be true.

(2) I ought to ascertain whether this faithfulness requires me to recognise other things the truth of which I have not heretofore seen.

(3) I ought not to use, without warning, the same words in different senses, unless the context shows which I intend.

(4) I ought not to exaggerate the importance of any particular science as against the whole, nor the importance of the whole as against the common experience which is before, in, and after science.

(5) I ought to keep vividly before my consciousness the facts and principles without which science could not exist, though science cannot prove their existence.

(6) In order to be sure that my conclusions are intellectually justified, I ought to ascertain the facts, and test the inferences drawn therefrom, in accordance with the laws of the several sciences concerned.

(7) Inasmuch as difficulties are not necessarily contradictions, their presence is not of itself a reason for unbelief; objections which are fatal I ought to carefully distinguish from those which are not; and I ought to accept those conclusions for which, notwithstanding difficulties or objections, the evidence is in quality and quantity greatest.

(8) I ought not to demand logical, mathematical or

mechanical evidence for real existences in the sense of evidence *derived from* logic, mathematics, or mechanics; but I have the right to demand that the evidence given shall be in harmony with, or, at least, not contradictory of, the laws of quality, quantity, force which those sciences set forth, unless there should be reason to suppose those sciences mistaken on the points in question.

(9) While I ought to recognise and obey, in all evidence, the laws contained in the several sciences to which the evidence relates—logic, mathematics, mechanics, astronomy, geology, biology, psychology, sociology—I am bound to remember that the evidence itself must arise directly or indirectly out of experience, interpreted in the light of those sciences, and that no interpretation can be valid as against ascertained facts.

(10) I ought to remember that as these laws are our guides in determining the accuracy of our science in all departments of thought, and as experience in its widest meaning is our only means of acquiring knowledge at all, it is extremely important to make no mistakes as to the nature or application of these laws, or what it is they can show.

(11) I ought to recollect that though it is, perhaps, impossible to have experience of anything without some experience of its relations, yet it is the thing, not its relations, that one is thinking of; that when testimony is borne to any fact, it may have many implications which never entered the mind of the

witness; that testimony is directed to facts, not to explanations, and is therefore not anti- but ante-scientific.

(12) I ought not to require, for controversial purposes, any kind or degree of evidence not required for scientific purposes. Experience is of two kinds—personal and "foreign." The greater part of science is necessarily based on the experiences of others. That I have not personal experience of Christ in the flesh is not therefore to be urged against the truth of Christianity. Again, while I am entitled to test thoroughly the evidence of such facts as are within ordinary capacity, there is no need that the witnesses be "scientific experts."

(13) As, on the one hand, I ought not to conclude that because one book in a set is true that therefore all others associated with it are true also—even though it may be customary to bind them in one cover—so on the other, I ought not to regard the failure of one book to pass the ordeal of criticism as evidence against even one of the remainder, much less against them all. So, also, a corrupt passage here or there does not prove the rest corrupt.

(14) I ought not to forget that there is no distinct science of Christian evidence; that the same laws which obtain elsewhere obtain here also; that the term Christian relates only to the subject-matter, not to the evidence. No doubter, therefore, has the right to turn away from real evidential writers as if their method were not that of science; and no Christian has

the right to try to escape the point of the sceptic's sword by retreating into a misty land where no laws of evidence are obeyed.

(15) I ought to note well the different senses in which the word "certainty," is used. It is, I think, unquestionable that as we have emotional and moral, as well as intellectual knowledge; so have we emotional and moral, as well as intellectual certainty. But what we may call here for distinction's sake reasonable certainty can only arise from the consciousness that the conclusions drawn are justified by the evidence given; and that the evidence is of trustworthy quality and of adequate quantity as tested by the recognised Laws of Belief.

Seeing, then, that there are recognised laws of evidence, I ought, instead of abandoning myself to the conclusion that no conclusion is possible, to set myself, with resolute and constant will, to discover, and act on the discovery, how far, and in what sense, it is my duty to become, in conscious belief and voluntary conduct, a Theist and a Christian.

LECTURE IV.

THE PREOCCUPATION OF WORLDLINESS AS SECULARISTIC POSITIVISM.

1. INTRODUCTION.

KNOWING as I do that Positivism as a system has very few followers in England, that it is regarded with very little favour by Agnostics generally, and that I have not much to say on the subject that has not been already said, I do not propose to take it as a separate topic in these lectures. But regarded as a spirit, it is convenient, and I think just, to treat it under what may be called the Preoccupation of Secularism. By this I mean more than the predominant, if not exclusive, interest in "science as the providence of life," which, practically at least, ignores religion. For there exists one form of Agnosticism which is not a spirit only; one which was precipitated into a system before the word Agnostic came into vogue. It is a kind of embodiment of Positivism as a philosophy, not of Positivism as a religion. It has a considerable number of adherents who are organized into a body with President, Vice-President, Secretaries, Lecturers, Teachers, and Journal. It is

called the National Secular Society. Its founder was Mr. Holyoake, but, in its later form, Mr. Bradlaugh was its most powerful representative. It is probably partly passing into Socialism, but it is still influential enough to demand notice in addresses like these. What I am at present concerned with is only to show that Secularism has not justified its existence to reason, for when separated from science, which is the common inheritance, it is simply Atheism in the sense which does not deny that God is, but only says "I do not know." It is true that it claims to be something more than anti-religious, but as I shall endeavour to make plain, the "something more" is not its peculiar or distinctive feature. In doing this I will throw my argument into the form of proving two propositions, of which the first deals with the intellectual, the second with the moral aspect of the subject.

2. The First Proposition.

The first proposition is: Secularism, distinctively considered, is not a system of truth, though it professes to be, and, therefore, cannot justify its existence to reason. I will state in three sentences the argument by which I will sustain this position. The first is that Secularism claims to be a system of truth; the second is that if you take from Secularism all that does not belong to it, distinctively considered, there is nothing but Atheism left; the third is that inasmuch as Secularism, distinctively considered, is

Atheism, it cannot be a system of truth ; because it has no truth to offer, and because it is not a system at all ; and, therefore, professing to be what it is not, it cannot justify its existence to reason. Having thus described my argument as a whole, I will now state it in detail.

In the first place, Secularism professes to be a system of truth. Mr. Watts wrote a pamphlet entitled the "Philosophy of Secularism," and I appeal to your own judgment whether that does not at least suggest a system. Mr. Holyoake published a work on the "Principles of Secularism," and of course in so doing formally claimed for Secularism the character of a system. As we shall presently see, Mr. Bradlaugh regarded Secularism as teaching men physical, moral, intellectual, social, political, and economic laws, which shows that in his opinion also Secularism was a system. So much for my first point.

3. Secularism is Atheism.

In the second place, if there be taken from Secularism that which does not properly belong to it, there is nothing left but Atheism, and therefore Secularism, distinctively considered, is Atheism. At page 14 of the debate between Mr. Bradlaugh and Mr. Holyoake, Mr. Bradlaugh asks, "How can you have your secular entrenchments, for what is your Secularism going to do? It is going to teach men, as Mr. Holyoake explained, in his very able exposition of

Secularism in the Cowper-street debate with Mr. Grant:

"'The physical laws on which health depends; the moral laws on which happiness depends; the intellectual laws on which knowledge depends; the social and political laws on which material prosperity and advancement depend; the economic laws on which wealth depends.'"

One will readily see that there is here a misuse of the word Secularism, as if it were identical with science. These are examples of laws which every one would do well to study; but there is nothing in this to characterize the Secularists, and to distinguish them as a community from the great body of Englishmen in this country. To see what their distinctive mark really is, kindly note the following quotation. In the debate already named, Mr. Bradlaugh said:—

"Although at present it may be perfectly true that all men who are Secularists are not yet Atheists, I put it to you as also perfectly true, that, in my opinion, the logical consequence of the acceptance of Secularism must be that the man gets to Atheism if he has brains enough to comprehend."

Had these words been incidentally uttered in the heat of debate, one would not have felt it right to take them too seriously; but, as a matter of fact, they were the deliberate expression of Mr. Bradlaugh's real convictions, and that they were so understood at the time nearly every Secularist knows. Indeed, one of Mr. Bradlaugh's best known lieutenants soon

after described Atheism as the logical definition of Secularism. Later in the same year I heard Mr. Bradlaugh say, in the Newcastle Town Hall, that he did not care to discuss "whether Secularism is Atheism, because I think it is."

4. Atheism is simply a Negation.

In the third place, if Secularism be Atheism, it cannot be a system of truth, because it has no truth to offer, and is not, in fact, a system at all. If you ask an Atheist any question concerning the existence of God, or the immortality of the soul, the answer given is either "I don't know," or, "I deny." It goes without saying that ignorance and denial cannot constitute a system of knowledge, and therefore if Atheism be the logical definition of Secularism, it follows that Secularism is either "I don't know," or "I deny." Atheists sometimes say, "Let us pass on to other subjects, questions concerning the universe, or human nature." But the moment you do this you pass out of the sphere of Atheism into that of positive science, or the philosophy of mind, and, I suppose I may say without egotism, that I value these as much as does any Secularist on the face of the earth. Whether science is necessarily involved in Theism is a question which we will discuss later; but, unless science means "I do not know," or "I deny," it is not Atheism. As we have seen, however, though science is not Atheism, Secularism is. I do not affirm there is never any merit in saying "I do

not know," or "I deny," but it is at all events clear that this is the only merit to which Secularism, distinctively considered, can lay claim.

5. The Second Proposition.

You will see that just the same line of thought must be followed here as in the previous address. But let it be at once clearly understood that the argument is directed against an *ism*, not against the persons who follow that *ism*. No one, I think, knows better than the present writer what noble fellows there are among Secularists, and, in any case, we must judge of men as we actually find them to be, and not as we imagine they ought to be on their principles. This being understood, I may now state the second proposition.

It is this: Secularism, distinctively considered, is not a system of morality, and, therefore, is unworthy of trust as a guide. For the sake of perfect clearness I will state in three sentences the method by which I propose to prove the proposition just given. Firstly, Secularism professes to be a system of morality; secondly, Secularism, being confessedly Atheism, is not a system of morality, and has, in fact, no moral principles to offer; thirdly, because Secularism, distinctively considered, has no moral principles to offer, it is unworthy of trust as a guide.

6. Secularism Professes to be a System.

The first position is that Secularism, which is Atheism, professes to be a system of morality, and here is the proof. On pages twenty-eight and twenty-nine of the debate already mentioned, Mr. Bradlaugh says :—

"It is on the facts of the universe it (Atheism) gives its lessons. It is by the diffusion of real knowledge among the people, and the improvement of the people that Atheism does put out its scheme of morality. You cannot have a scheme of morality without Atheism. The Utilitarian scheme is an Atheistical scheme."

7. Secularism not a System.

The second position is that Secularism has, in fact, no moral principles to offer.

1. Being admittedly Atheism, it is without any moral influence that comes from the belief in God as good.

2. Being admittedly Atheism, it is without any moral influence that comes from the belief in a future life.

3. Being admittedly Atheism, it is without the moral principles that are found by the study of human nature. This is a very important point. Once you come to the study of human nature you are no longer within the sphere of Secularism considered as Atheism.

4. If there be morality suggested by the processes of nature, as distinguished from human nature, Secularism, as Atheism, is equally without help from that source.

In his debate with Mr. Hutchins, at Wigan (page 48), Mr. Bradlaugh said :

"My friend says let us leave geology, astronomy, physiology, psychology, and ethnology, and then tell us how we are to know what is right. I can't. It is only by studying these, and by knowing the facts around you, that you can know what is right."

It is clear, then, according to Mr. Bradlaugh's statement, that it is not from Atheism but from geology, astronomy, etc., that Atheists obtain their scheme of morality.

8. Secularism Unworthy of Trust.

The third position is one that follows inevitably from the two already taken. It is that because Secularism, distinctively considered, has no moral principles to offer, it is unworthy of trust as a guide. I suppose every one will admit that this conclusion rigorously follows from the premises I have given. One might lay some stress on the fact that Atheism somewhat leans to Fatalism, but I will content myself with remarking that when Atheism does this, it directly tends to the destruction of morality, and even to the abrogation of its own right to exist. For where there is no freedom there can be no responsibility ; where there is no responsibility there can be

no morality; where there is no morality there can be no duties; and where there are no duties there can be no rights. It ought not, however, to be difficult to see the entire justice of the statement that Atheism, from its own nature, is absolutely incapable of becoming a moral guide to any one. If what is called Atheism be something positive, then the name is a misnomer. Atheism indicates a negation only, and if Atheism be but a negation, then nothing positive can come out of it, for out of nothing nothing can come. But, as we have already seen, Secularism is Atheism, and, therefore, cannot be a moral guide. I take it for granted that you do not want a scheme of morality at all if that scheme is not to guide you in the way you should live, and having shown you that Secularism, distinctively considered, has no moral principles to offer, it is sufficiently clear that it is unworthy of your trust as a guide.

There can, however, be no question that to many Secularists the identification of Secularism and Atheism will appear wholly unjust; but I must ask you to remember the significant qualifying words, "distinctively considered." It is not alleged that that just and noble Secularism which recognises the true province of Secular reason for guidance in human duties; the value of the utilitarian rule which makes the good of all the law of duty; the employment of "material means, tempered by human sympathy, for the attainment of social improvement; the sinlessness of well-informed sincerity," as wit-

nessed by fearless freedom of thought, just "expository speech, the practice of personal conviction within the limits of neither outraging nor harming others"; it is not, I say, for an instant alleged that such Secularism as this has the slightest tendency to Atheism. On the contrary, I should regard it as being to a considerable extent applied to Christianity. It is only when the *sufficiency* of secular reason, the *adequacy* of the utilitarian rule, the *exclusive* use of material means, are asserted and advocated that Secularism becomes anti-Christian. But even then it is not necessarily Atheistic; for, however unlikely, it is at least possible, that such Secularists might be reverent believers in God. The point to be noted is that in all this we have nothing in the least peculiar to those who call themselves by the name. If, what is not characteristic be extracted from Secularism, there is only Atheism left, and this, so far as either a system of truth or a scheme of morality is concerned, having nothing to give, gives nothing.

LECTURE V.

SECULARISM AS CRITICAL.

1. Introduction.

Many Secularists with whom I have talked have admitted the force of the foregoing argument, but have urged that the term Secularist must be practically regarded as equivalent to the term Freethinker. My answer has been: If by Freethinkers you mean thinkers free from laws of thinking, there are none; if free from moral restraint, there ought to be none. The reply has been: That is right enough, but you must admit that in the name of Christianity there have been imposed utterly unnecessary and frequently unjust restrictions on freedom of thought. My rejoinder has usually been to the effect: Yes, I admit that; but I do not admit that such restrictions are any part of the Catholic Faith. But the question at present before us is not the Catholic Faith, but Secularism. Nevertheless, answered a theistic freethinker whom I have long known, let me criticise, as a Secularist, the Catholic Faith in a way to which you, perhaps, have not been accustomed.

2. The Secularist's Criticism.

Let me, he said, repeat your Apostles' Creed :—

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth :

And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary, Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Was crucified, dead, and buried, He descended into hell ; The third day he rose again from the dead, He ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty ; From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Ghost ; The holy Catholick Church ; The Communion of Saints ; The Forgiveness of sins ; The Resurrection of the body, And the life everlasting. Amen."

This, in its second paragraph is, for the most part, simply a recitation of supposed facts.

For a fuller statement I will take the Nicene Creed :—

" I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible :

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of his Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God, Begotten, not made, Being of one substance with the Father, By whom all things were made : Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven,

And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, And was made man, And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried, And the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures, And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. And he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead: Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord and Giver of life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spake by the Prophets. And I believe one Catholick and Apostolick Church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, And I look for the Resurrection of the dead, And the life of the world to come. Amen."

I might cite the difficulty of attaching any clear meaning to the words, "Begotten, not made," as applied to the Eternal Son; I might question whether "Light of light" is not too figurative for a formal document; I might ask what "came down from heaven" can possibly mean as applied to God, the second person of the Blessed Trinity. These expressions appear to imply inexact thought; but my present object is simply to ascertain what the belief of Christians in general is, not whether the belief corresponds to the facts. I suppose the Nicene Creed does express their belief.

3. "Our Common Christianity."

Of course the question is, What is common to all? not, What is peculiar to any? I omit altogether the Unitarians, not as implying anything either for or against, but as excluding the vexed question of their title to be considered Christians, which I have neither time nor inclination to discuss. The Christian population of the world is estimated at four hundred and fifteen millions. If we leave out one hundred and fifteen millions for all those who cannot be rightly included under the well-known names of Eastern Church, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Methodists, and the relatively small number, under any of these designations, who have in any important respect departed, and all those children who, as they grow up, may yet depart, from the common type, we shall probably have left out one hundred millions too many. But in any case we have three hundred millions left, who are nominally one in their belief about Christ. I do not, of course, mean that they would agree in any form of belief as a form. I am aware that neither the Apostles' Creed nor the Nicene would, as such, find universal acceptance among Christians; some object to forms altogether, some would prefer other forms than these. It strikes an outsider as a strange thing that Churchmen, and the majority of Nonconformists, cannot agree as to what religious teaching should be given in Board Schools, and their acquiescence in the result

that often none is given, almost suggests that they hate each other more than they love Christ. Were I one of the Orthodox, I fancy I should say that for my child almost any form was better than none. The doubt will come whether Christians value their Christianity as much as they pretend. To me their divisions are inexplicable, except on the ground that they do not value Christ in practice as much as they do in theory. Still, in theory, at least, if not in the form of the theory, they are practically unanimous. Though the two great creeds are not by all accepted in form, yet, as they are accepted by all in substance, we may rightly quote them as the nominal answer of three hundred millions of human beings to the question—What think ye of Christ?

4. The Catholic Faith.

It will be easily understood why I do not cite the so-called Athanasian Creed. It is not because of any opinion I may personally have against that venerable symbol; it is simply because a very large proportion of Christians do not accept it. They accept, no doubt, its essential doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, but not the form in which those doctrines are presented, nor the threatenings by which they are accompanied. Moreover, in the Church of England it is not, I know, binding on the laity. How the clergy reconcile it to their consciences to subscribe so strange a formula is, I suppose, a part of the sacred mysteries. The position

of a doubter like myself is not pleasant. I would listen to representatives of the Catholic Faith, pure and simple, if I knew where to find them. The Greek Church is out of my reach, even if she has made no additions; the Roman Church has overlaid the Faith with a mass of matter other Christians do not accept; Nonconformists specialize painfully some aspects, and allow others, naturally, less than due emphasis; the Church of England adds not only the Athanasian Creed, but also the Thirty-nine Articles. This shakes my confidence in the reality of the Catholic Faith, and in the clergy as its representatives. When they profess to believe not only that Christ did "truly rise again from death," not only that He took again His body with flesh and bones, which I do not at present dispute, but also that He ascended therewith into heaven, my opinion of their capacity to appreciate either Science or Scripture is considerably lowered. For there seems no possibility of reconciling the fourth Article with St. Paul's scientific doctrine of a spiritual body, or his distinct statement that flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. When they say, "In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church," one's respect for their scholarship falls several degrees; for the list which follows contains more than one book of whose authority there has been doubt in the Church, and thus the sixth Article contradicts itself. Nor can one's reverence

be very high for the moral judgment of men who are able to agree with the doctrine that original sin, "in every person born into this world, deserves God's wrath and damnation," which is the vigorous language of the ninth Article, or with the terms of the tenth, twelfth, seventeenth, and eighteenth, which seem to reduce man to a diseased automaton, the plaything of Divine decrees. It may be not unjustly urged that the conditions of subscription have been altered by Act of Parliament, and that the clergy are no longer required to assent to "all and every," but only to give a general assent and consent. But how a "general assent and consent" is compatible with such omissions as those specified above I do not know. As the case stands, I know not where to turn to find pure representatives of the Catholic Faith. Every "church" adds, every "denomination" distorts, something. This, however, though it shakes one's faith in the clergy, whether Conformist or Nonconformist, and in those of the laity who accept their guidance in this matter, does not alter the fact that the Apostles' and the Nicene Creed are the Catholic Faith, which is, in substance, professedly held by three hundred millions of human beings, and that these, as far as I am able to judge, include the most capable of the human race. To this must be added that this Faith has persisted and extended from the foundation of the Church to the present day. The question, however, is: Is this Faith really held to-day by a majority of those who profess it?

5. The Extent of Disbelief.

I note, too, whether I like it or not, that it shows no signs of contracting its area, however much it may be lessening its hold. I am not in the least deceived by the enormous circulation of sceptical literature. The readers of that literature are, for the most part, men who have not the slightest intention of formally parting company with the ancient Faith. Some read out of "contrariness;" some out of generous desire to do justice to opponents; some because they see presented therein neglected phases of Christianity; some because they like to see the doubts that linger in their own hearts adequately set forth; some because of the great value of the thoughts apart from tendency to unbelief; some because of the pleasure which acute discrimination, human feeling, poetic insight, vivid imagination, moral earnestness, mastery of vigorous argument and noble English must always impart, whatever the subject be; and some from mixed motives, like those which have made Conservatives hang with something like rapture on the oratory of a Gladstone or a Bright, and Liberals listen with keenest relish to the sarcastic denunciations of themselves by a D'Israeli or a Salisbury. I do not much wonder that many are misled; I am not. To me it is tolerably certain that if writers like Matthew Arnold, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Professor Huxley, Mr. Samuel Laing, and Mr. Cotter Morrison, were read by disbelievers alone, their works would rarely reach a second edition, and

those of the still more antagonistic type would find no readers at all. St. Paul's Cathedral would easily hold, with some room to spare for spectators, the entire body, in England, of disbelievers, as distinguished from doubters. But let not the Church be too exultant on this account. That which prevents the doubter becoming the disbeliever is not so much the charm of the Church as it is the Cross of Christ. A successful and powerful ecclesiastical organization as such has no hold on him. What grasps his heart, as with the grip of God, is the defeat of Christ. It is at least possible that in that defeat may be found the key to all the success his nobler nature longs for. If the Church is to be an adequate blessing to the doubter, it must, from prince to ploughman, from archbishop to apparitor, manifestly "suffer together with Christ," and seek no honour that is not plainly being "glorified together" with Him. How far the Church, in England or elsewhere, has realized this ideal, let churchmen ask themselves. In my judgment, at least, though disbelief may be stationary, or even decreasing, doubt is eating into the very heart of modern Christianity. The fact is, I am almost equally dissatisfied with the defence of and the attacks on Christianity, and I turn wearily away from both to make the best I can of those things which neither seems to call in question. It is for this reason that I am a Secularist.

6. Some Words in Reply.

One can scarcely admit the validity of the reason here given, though there is a great deal in the foregoing criticism of "Christianity" which is itself Christian; but the criticism cannot be regarded as in any sense a defence of Secularism. Some of the questions turn upon points that are outside of the Catholic Faith, some upon misunderstanding of points that are inside, some upon the points dealt with in these lectures, but none of them turns upon the point of Secularism itself. But even in the vaguer sense which confounds it with all kinds of unbelief, the interest of Secularism is rather in what it attacks than in what it is. Its exclusion of the Divine vulgarizes; for the Divine is essential to poetry, and to that element in prose which corresponds to poetic conception. George Eliot was scarcely what one would call a Theist, but strike the Divine interest out of her novels, and the human interest also disappears. As far as we know, there is not in any language a picture of man without, if we dare so speak, a Divine background. Of course, if such a picture existed, it would not be true to fact, as facts are up to the present. But have we no novelist gifted enough to imagine and present a state of society from which even the memory of the Divine had disappeared? To us, who *have* the Divine, such a work would be of fascinating interest. But would it have any interest at all if society had reached the condition supposed? I doubt it.

It is not dogmatising too much to say that no such condition can ever be reached. What may be called the Positivist's dream—*i.e.* a state of life from which everything but phenomena had vanished from human thought—is incapable of realization. It is the Divine setting of the Positivist, not his Positivism, which makes him interesting. In like manner, the Agnostic is interesting, not because of his Agnosticism, but because of his Christian setting. It is not his failure to know or believe that makes him attractive. It is the eternal interest of that which he does not know or believe that lightens with its glory his Agnosticism. Take out of the writings of Frederic Harrison, of Professor Huxley, or of Leslie Stephen, the Divine and Christian *interest*, then no one would care to read them, except for their literary charm. Positivism and Agnosticism would then completely fail in largeness. The mere assertion, when no longer standing in opposition to something greater, that phenomena are—*phenomena*, would then be no more interesting than the statement that a pebble is—a pebble. And leaving out of account the greatness of that which we are said not to know, Agnosticism would have no more attraction than would have the statement that ignorance is—ignorance. Speaking generally, and allowing for the fact that there is sometimes a great deal of unrecognised Christianity in Scepticism, the interest of Scepticism is not in the Scepticism itself, but in the Christianity it attacks. In other words, there is no alternative to Theism and Christianity

which would have power to interest, if these ceased to be. To be humanly interesting, in any sense of largeness, one must be Divinely interesting also.

The influence of Christ meets one everywhere. Modern history streams with it. The story of the world, since Christ came, is, without Christ, unintelligible. Everywhere He has to be taken into account. Italy, Spain, Russia, France, Germany, Europe, cannot unfold their records without revealing Him who "lifted with His pierced hand empires off their hinges, turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages," and governs with continually increasing dominion. Science and Literature and Art and Morals, are indebted to Him for that conquest of savage self without which they would present in vain to an indifferent world the charm of their truth, the glory of their thought, the melody of their music, the splendour of their righteousness. He alone, it would seem, enables man to discover *himself*, and to open his heart to all the voices of God; He alone can take men's sins out of their hearts because He alone can take men's hearts out of their sins. The very least that multitudes think of Him is that He is the greatest among the great, and hundreds of millions gladly call themselves by His name.

One does not lay heavy stress on mere numbers. Nevertheless, they become significant when we remember that they stand broadly for Europe, America and Australia as against Africa and Asia, in which also, however, belief is apparently gaining ground.

The numbers become more significant still when we recall the fact that the races who hold the belief are the best able to form a judgment. They are those who have shown the greatest capacity for criticism, the greatest care to test evidence, the greatest passion for truth as truth. The most fearless and profound critics agree with the great poets, painters, composers, and scholars, leaders, reformers, statesmen, and men of literature, in regarding Christ as of altogether exceptional greatness. As examples, one might take distinguished names almost as they happen to come into one's mind. There would not be much difference on this point. Here Strauss, Hilgenfeld, Davison, Renan, Matthew Arnold, are at one with Dante, Shakespeare, Milton, Browning, Tennyson; these with Galileo, Kepler, Bacon, Newton, Faraday; and these with Butler, Paley, Lightfoot, Westcott and Salmon. Jean Paul Richter's famous phrase expresses a universal feeling—"Holiest among the mighty, mightiest among the holy." Another kind of man was Napoleon; but the same conviction, if the report may be trusted, seems to have been burned into him: "Jesus Christ was more than man. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded great empires, but upon what did the creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for Him." "Spinoza calls Christ the symbol of Divine Wisdom; Kant and Jacobi hold Him up as the symbol of ideal perfection; Schelling and Hegel

as that of the union of the Divine and human." Rousseau is a name I am not fond of quoting, but I suppose he meant what he said in the following striking passage: "How petty are the books of the philosophers, with all their pomp, compared with the Gospels! Can it be that writings at once so sublime and so simple are the works of men? Can He whose life they tell be Himself no more than a mere man? Is there anything in His character of the enthusiast or the ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in His ways, what touching grace in His teachings! What a loftiness in His maxims, what profound wisdom in His words! What presence of mind, what delicacy and aptness in His replies! What an empire over His passions! Where is the man, where is the sage, who knows how to act, to suffer, and to die without weakness and without display? My friend, men do not invent like this; and the facts respecting Socrates, which no one doubts, are not so well attested as those about Jesus Christ. These Jews could never have struck this tone, or thought of this morality, and the Gospel has characteristics of truth so grand, so striking, so perfectly inimitable, that their inventors would be even more wonderful than He whom they portray. Yes, if the death of Socrates be that of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God." Less elaborate, but not less powerful, is the testimony of Germany's greatest thinker—Goethe: "I esteem the Gospels to be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them

the reflected splendour of a sublimity from the person of Jesus Christ of so Divine a kind as only the Divine could ever have manifested upon earth." And our own Carlyle, in deep-hearted characteristic words, thus: "Jesus of Nazareth, our divinest symbol.[1] Higher has the human thought not yet reached." "A symbol of quite perennial, infinite character, whose significance will ever demand to be anew inquired into, and anew made manifest." If one took only sceptics' so-called admissions, one could scarcely avoid the conclusion, that they found it difficult to speak at all of Christ without granting more than they wished. Of course it does not follow that, because Christ was Divine, the Church has truly interpreted His Divinity. But if such consensus of judgment has any meaning at all, it cannot mean less than that Jesus Christ was, as John Stuart Mill said, "unique." From that single expression, one might reasonably argue far in the direction of the Catholic Faith, and it is doubtful whether that Faith is not justified by the sceptics' admissions alone.

7. Atheism and Secular Conduct.

There is another aspect of the subject on which a few words must be said. Some Secularists, like Mr. Holyoake, admit that Atheism is merely a negative speculation concerning the existence of God, and that they must turn to science as the providence of life

[1] See Geikie's "Life of Christ," p. 1 *et seq.*

for the source of their moral system. They acknowledge the force of the foregoing criticism, and are even ready to say that so long as their belief in God and in a future life has no practical effect on their action there is no reason why Theists should not be "Secularists." But they contend that *practical* Atheism, at least, is indispensable to secular conduct. However much you believe in God, you must act as if there were none. The moment you allow "theology" to have any influence you cease to be a true Secularist. The only safe way is to follow science.

As against so much of theology as includes religion in the natural order the above statements lose their edge. Science has not yet exhausted, and it is not likely it ever will exhaust, nature. Truth is larger and more authoritative than science. If theology be true, then we have no right to be Secularists in any sense which excludes it. The question of religion is not primarily one of happiness and well-being, but of truth and obligation. Secularism cannot be the way of safety unless it is also the way of truth. Moreover, such safety as it offers can only be obtained by ignoring certain departments of inquiry that are as much in the natural order as are any other. There have been, and are, injurious forms even of Christianity, but it would be a hazardous assertion to make that the pure influence of Christ has ever injured any one, while its beneficial effect on science itself has been enormously great. Besides, "Secularism" assumes,

what it has no right to assume, that man ought to live for the present only, in a sense which excludes from the present all practical thought of Him to whom, present, past, and future alike belong. The only ground on which "Secularism" could justify itself would be that there is sufficient evidence that there is no God, or that, if God is, religion is not from Him. Meanwhile, the assumption that religion is to be tested simply by its influence on "secular" conduct is altogether intolerable. The assumption amounts to this: God is of no importance except as He exists for the "secular" well-being of man!

To the true man of science no such assumption is possible; to him the whole question is one of truth. Either the alleged facts of religion are facts or they are not. If they are, he has to ascertain in what sense, and whether they justify the inferences drawn from them. Science, he will say, has no right to ignore facts of any kind. Religious phenomena may turn out the most important of all. In any case, he has to determine what they are, and what they mean. The short and easy method of assuming that they are not facts at all is not the method of science.

If Secularism may be regarded from one point of view as a kind of organised worldliness, it may, from another, be considered as a protest against unreality in religion, the unreality which shows itself alike in unconcern about the will of God, and the welfare of men. The life of thousands is worldliness varnished with religion. What is the remedy? Are we, rejecting the religion, to take the worldliness and

shape it into a mode and rule of life, guided therein by practical science? Are we, rejecting the worldliness, to take the religion and shape that into a mode and rule of life, guided therein by moral philosophy? Nay, shall we not endeavour so to be, to do, to live, that we may be proportionately faithful to all sides of our nature, guided therein, now by what we call science, now by what we call philosophy, but always by the principles that seem to us true, in the order of their moral, intellectual, physical and social value? If, however, the appeal is to science, let it be to science in its widest sense; let it include not simply the material but the entire range of the natural. There, I shall endeavour to meet you.

8. Summary.

It may, in conclusion, be convenient to have before you in summary form the substance of what I have said touching Secularistic Positivism, especially as it is of very great importance to have clear ideas on the subject.

1. Secular properly means "pertaining to the age," Positive, "that which is certain."

2. But as each succeeding age inherits much from the preceding age, the secular and the positive must embrace what is received from the past as well as what is added in the present.

3. The secular and the positive must, therefore, be regarded, unless an arbitrary limit is fixed, as equivalent to that which pertains to all the recognisable past and present.

4. But the recognisable past and present enable us, from the observed persistence of force, to foresee and foretell the future, in certain aspects and to a certain extent.

5. The definition of the secular and positive must, therefore, be amended, so as to include the new element; in other words, "secular" means pertaining to the recognisable past, present, and future, and "positive" the same thing under the aspect of certainty.

6. But this definition makes the secular and positive equivalent to the scientific.

7. Unless, therefore, the secular and positive spirit or "ism" and the scientific spirit or "ism" be regarded as identical, the definition must be further amended.

8. If they are identical, whatever may be truly alleged of science may be also truly alleged of secularism and positivism.

9. But science, if it cannot affirm, cannot deny a future life. If, therefore, any spirit or system, professing to be secular and positive, requires unbelief in a future life, it is, so far forth, according to the definition given, really unsecular and unpositive.

10. Science, if it does not affirm, does not deny the existence of God. A system or spirit, therefore, which requires unbelief in the existence of God, is, so far forth, according to the definition given, really unsecular and unpositive.

11. Science implies the existence of an Omnipresent Power manifested in all phenomena. Any

spirit or system, therefore, which refuses to recognise the Omnipresent Power is, so far forth, anti-scientific, and, according to the definition given, really anti-secular and anti-positive.

12. If, therefore, the secular and scientific spirit be one, it is a misuse of the word "secularism" or "positivism," to employ it either as implying, or as equivalent to, Atheism.

13. But, as we have seen, there is not simply a spirit, there is a denomination calling itself Secularist, whose principles are confessedly Atheistic. It follows that, so far forth, this so called secular body is unscientific. We have also seen that Positivism is confessedly atheistic. It follows that it also is, so far forth, unscientific. But if Positivism and Secularism be defined as equivalent to science, then "Positivism" and "Secularism" are really unpositive and unsecular; in other words, they are self-contradictory.

14. The preoccupation of Secularism or Positivism as a system or a spirit is not, therefore, justified, and its veto on inquiry vanishes.

15. If Secularism or Positivism is not to be defined as equivalent to science, it is bound to show that its veto has scientific authority, and this implies that the way of inquiry is open.

The Secularist or the Positivist, therefore, is not justified in assuming the questions at issue to be outside the range of inquiry, for this is the thing to be proved, and, without inquiry, cannot be proved.

LECTURE VI.

CONCERNING THE SUPERNATURAL.

1. Introduction.

You will have noted that in the preceding arguments I have said nothing about your objections to the terms "supernatural" and "miracles." Why? Because in what I understand to be your meaning, or, if you will forgive my putting it that way, I will say in what ought to be your meaning, I think you are right. You have so frequently found that what has been regarded as supernatural, has turned out, on further investigation, to be "naturally" explicable, that you have come to the conclusion that all phenomena are to be regarded as "natural." In that conclusion you are, I think, justified, provided you give sufficient extension to the last term.

2. The Supernatural.

The only supernatural you will admit is not the phenomena, but their Ultimate Cause. You also hold that the Omnipresent Power is manifest in all phenomena without exception, and, though working naturally, is itself supernatural. Religious phenomena

are, therefore, to you just as "natural" as any other; and the Ultimate Cause is just as supernatural when producing what are called "physical" as when producing what are called "spiritual" effects. In other words, the only definition of the supernatural which you deem allowable is—the Ultimate Cause of the Natural. And you hold that Christianity must be regarded as being as "natural" as any other religion. But you, also, admit that while its Ultimate Cause is not more supernatural in religion than in science, Christianity is yet the highest manifestation of that Cause known to man. It is not more supernatural than other religions or than other departments of knowledge, but it is a higher order of the natural. And, perhaps, you will not deny that there is some recognition of the principle for which you contend in the following words:—

"In one of those weighty and pregnant sentences in which the author of the "Analogy" glances outside his own proper subject, he writes as follows:—

'Nor is there any absurdity in supposing that there may be beings in the universe whose capacities, and knowledge, and views may be so extensive as that the whole Christian dispensation may to them appear natural, *i.e.*, analogous or conformable to God's dealings with other parts of His creation; as natural as the visible known course of things appears to us.'

"I cannot help thinking that we have here an example of Butler's grave irony, that to his own mind this

supposition was more than a possibility, but that he accepted the crude antithesis of the natural and the supernatural as expressing the common thought of his day, and as affording a basis for his polemic against the Deists. I wish to put forward for consideration the suggestion that this old antithesis, if harmless once, has now become fraught with mischief; and that the logical defence of religion should now proceed upon the lines hinted at in this pregnant sentence of Butler, the antithesis being suppressed."

You will admit the significance of this quotation when I tell you that it is taken from the *Guardian*,[1] perhaps the most powerful exponent, in the weekly press, of the Catholic faith.

3. The Antithesis.

The article from which I have quoted goes on to say:—

"Of what nature is the antithesis? Is it purely logical, or is it metaphysical? If it is the former, it can be dispensed with; it is merely a mode of distinguishing our mental operations. That is natural which we perceive or apprehend by certain faculties of our mind; that is supernatural which we perceive or apprehend by certain other faculties: the natural, say, we apprehend by sense or by the understand-

[1] July 27th, 1892.

ing, the supernatural by faith. Then there is no need to suppose any fixed limit between the two; for there is not necessarily any difference between the object of the understanding and the object of faith. That which is at one time apprehended by faith only may at another time come within the purview of the understanding. Faith may vanish into sight without any change in our exterior conditions. But in that case it is needless to distinguish sharply between faith and our other faculties. If it is the gift of God, so also is the understanding. If it is obscured in individuals, so also is sight or hearing. If it is clouded or even destroyed by sin, so also undoubtedly are many other powers of the perfect man which are allowed on all hands to be natural. We may then regard faith as part of the ordinary equipment of the complete and perfect man, and so dispense with the logical antithesis of the natural and the supernatural.

"But if the antithesis be a metaphysical one, the matter is more serious. And it can hardly be doubted that in England at least it does so present itself to most minds. It suggests the co-existence of the two whole worlds of being; they are not distinguished merely as cognisable to us by separate faculties; each has its own substantial existence; each its own laws, which are not necessarily alike; and the one might be annihilated, leaving the other unaffected. The natural and the supernatural have hard and fast limits: the one is cognisable to sense or understand-

ing, the other is eternally to be apprehended by faith only, or by some spiritual faculty of perception, hereafter to be developed, which shall transcend the moral certitude of faith; in this spiritual sense only will faith be swallowed up in sight.

"Such is perhaps the common acceptance of the antithesis. It is certainly the source of much difficulty and conflict. Is it true, or is it false? If it be true, we must face the difficulties and fight out the conflict. But if it is false, and can be got rid of, there may be great gain, and some of the attacks upon religion may lose all their force. In a certain state of public thought this antithesis, even if erroneous, could do little harm. God was recognised, even by the opponents of religion, as the Author of nature. The defenders acknowledged the same Author of the supernatural order as the proper object of religion. The dual universe was co-ordinated under one Creator and Governor. There was presumably an analogy between the two orders, and something of the supernatural order might be surmised by faith from the study of nature; there was a *natural religion;* but for the most part faith required direct instruction from the Creator; religion was *revealed.* In this state of the public mind religion could only be attacked either by a blank denial of the supernatural order, which was an irrational proceeding, or by asserting an incongruity in the accepted laws and facts of the supernatural order, which proved it not to be from the Author of nature, and showed it to be the product

of a disordered fancy. Such was the attack which Butler, in the concentrated argument of his few pages, crushed conclusively.

"The attack has shifted its ground, and now proceeds on two separate lines. The first is that of materialism and positivism. No author of nature is acknowledged, and therefore the existence of the supernatural order can rationally be denied—nay, must be denied. A self-existent universe cannot be dual; if nature be self-existent it is the universe, and there is room for nothing beside. The second is that of Agnosticism. If there be two separate orders in the universe, so entirely antithetic, how can they interact? A supernatural world there may be, but it is not cognisable to our natural faculties; and, furthermore, since conduct is a matter of our natural existence, this supernatural order cannot concern our conduct. But the essential thought of Christianity—of religion at large—is supernatural influence over conduct. Religion is therefore an irrational absurdity—the imagined interaction of two worlds between which there is no bridge of communication. It was perhaps a partial anticipation of this objection that the shrewd but narrow mind of Paley demurred to the description of miracles as supernatural, and substituted the very neutral term 'superhuman.' It is perplexing to find a supernatural force affecting so natural a thing as bodily disease.

"If the foregoing be correct, the present-day attack upon religion rests entirely upon the antithesis of the

natural and the supernatural. The process is obvious. We yield up the natural order to the man of science. He searches it through and through; he finds it complete and consistent. We cannot gainsay him; we believe it to come from the creative will of the unchanging God. Our searcher can find no room for arbitrary action or interference; he will not hear of any inroad from without, any intervention from another world; he finds nature self-sufficient and self-contained, and impenetrable to any action of the supernatural. And since we are clearly of the natural order ourselves, the supernatural, if it exist at all, is outside of us, alien to us, unknowable.

"We find it impossible to answer the logic of the Agnostic, nor do we know how to meet the blank denial of the materialist, who says that he can trace our holiest feelings to the vibration of a nerve-centre. The result is that we are disposed to retire to our trenches, to take our stand behind the breastwork of the faith of which we are conscious. There may be safety here for the individual, but it is an inglorious safety; we leave the enemy to vaunt his triumph, and we leave exposed to him the souls that have not so robust a self-defence. Another result is seen in a tendency to withdraw faith and religion more and more into a remote and circumscribed province of their own. There is an inclination to abandon morality entirely to the natural order, an acceptance of the hedonism which it is the special duty of religion to combat. In a word, we are face to face with an

exaggerated spirituality ; it is hard to say where lies the greatest danger—on this side materialism, on that side spiritualism.

"If we would defend historic Christianity, we must either shatter the logic of Agnosticism and materialism, or else we must remove the foundation on which they stand. If Christianity be true, and the logic unanswerable, then the foundation must be false. It consists in the metaphysical antithesis of the natural and the supernatural ; we have supplied it, in fact, ourselves. If this be destroyed, the attack is paralysed. The materialist and the agnostic cannot consistently reassert the separate supernatural order if we renounce it. If we pronounce it, in Butler's words, 'as natural as the visible known course of things,' they can hardly gainsay us. The hardest materialist, the most arrogant positivist does not pretend to have penetrated all the recesses of nature ; if we tell him that those facts known as supernatural are the result of natural causes as yet untraced, he may suspend his judgment, but he cannot rationally deny the phenomena. If we accept the universe as one, we shall see alike in the action of quinine, and in the touch of the thaumaturgic hand, the operation of causes moved by the will of God. In the one case the operation is just a little more traceable, that is all. Both are natural ; in Butler's definition 'similar, stated, and uniform.' We shall permit the man of science to investigate the natural causes of the 'miracle,' and if they baffle him we shall bid him be

patient, for nature has not yet revealed to him all her secrets. In what respect is it more miraculous that a human will should cast a mountain directly into the sea, and that a human will should set in motion countless molecules of nerve and muscle stuff, with the result that the Isthmus of Darien is cut through? Only that in the one case the process is very imperfectly understood, while in the other it is not understood at all. . . . The conception of the universe which I would urge as the true one conciliates this antithesis. The universe is one—one not merely as a dual existence co-ordinated under one creative will or law—the argument of the *Analogy*—but one in essence and in order, one in cause and operation, one alike to science and to philosophy, and one to the theology which is the sum of all sciences and the key to all philosophies. And if the universe is ontologically one, it is a false philosophy which should read into it even a logical dualism."

So far as the foregoing deals with "Materialism" it does not concern you. Agnostics who follow Mr. Spencer, and these are probably nine-tenths of the whole number, are not materialists, but monists in the same sense as in the above extract. That which is called spiritual and that which is called material are to you equally phases of the "natural." I accept, indeed have long accepted, the position. And what I ask you to give, if you can, is a scientifically more "natural" explanation of Christianity than Christ, of Christ than God.

4. The "Supernatural" and Prayer.

It follows that so long as the position here taken is adhered to, no objection based on supposed implication of violated law can be urged against prayer. To quote once more from the same source:—"Tell a man of science that your prayer may bring rain, and he smiles incredulous; tell him that this is effected by an immediate causation, differing in kind from those which he knows to be the causes of rain, and he will probably grow angry and intolerant. But tell him that just as your spoken wish acting through a very obscure chain of causes brings you a cup of water from a friendly hand, so your wish uttered in prayer acts in exactly the same manner upon a slightly more obscure chain of causes, and brings you water from the clouds, and he can but suspend his judgment; laughter will now be evidence only of shallowness. Tell him that the healing of disease by a word is but a miraculous—that is, extraordinary—manifestation of knowledge and will, of the same kind as that which guides the surgeon's knife, and you do at least silence his answer that 'Miracles do not happen.' They are happening every day. The wonder is only a matter of degree."

5. A Common Question.

I can imagine what is passing in some minds while listening to these words. "Are you not giving up your position altogether?" some will say. "If

prayer has laws of its own, how is it God that answers?"

What is it, my brothers, that is really in your mind when you ask that? Is it that you think an answer which comes by law cannot come from God?

Perhaps. If obeying their laws, I set in operation certain forces of nature in order to obtain a given result, though I may trace both the forces and their laws to God, yet it is not God, but force, that I set agoing. Whereas, according to the theory of prayer, it is not force, but God, that acts in response to my petition. If prayer has laws of its own, the word must be used in a sense wholly different from that which I intend when I speak of law by which I can produce physical or chemical effects.

It is, I think, true that even in physics and chemistry your obedience to law is itself a kind of prayer. It may be that even there it is God Who does the work in response to your obedience; that, like Him Who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, He puts His power at your service. But why take your illustration from physics or chemistry? Why not from beings like yourselves? When a friend comes to you for help, is your response subject to no conditions? And is it less your help that you cannot move to meet him without obeying the laws of motion? That you cannot utter one word of kindly greeting without obeying the laws of speech? That you cannot pour out to him your soul of friendship and of love without obeying deep psychological laws?

Will you say that it is not from you, but from the laws of motion, or speech, or psychology, that springs the answer to your friend's request? Is it, then, less God Who responds because His answers are subject to conditions which His loving wisdom has fixed? Is the blessing we have sought not His blessing because in giving it He, too, obeys His own laws? Consider a moment. How could a blessing that was absolutely outside of law ever be known as His? I grant that, as "spirit with spirit may meet" in those deep mysteries of life which are beneath consciousness, so may God act on us without our knowledge. But, if we are not only to ask and have, but also to know we have, there must be laws of answering as well as laws of asking, sufficiently definite for our guidance, though not for our comprehension.

6. Are there Laws of Prayer?

But are there such laws, and where may they be found? The full answer to that question would require a volume to itself. Some of the laws, such as reverence, loyalty to right, proportionate desire, and the like, will at once occur to you as rising out of the nature of the case. But you will distinguish between the laws of praying and the laws of answering. As to the former, nothing can serve our purpose so well as the Lord's Prayer. You will find that the first thing is to pray until you are children loving your Father more than yourselves. After that, and while

you continue that, you can hardly ask amiss. And I think, you ought to believe that whatever you ask Him is, in its essence and principle, not necessarily in its form, granted in the measure and the manner the wisdom of love sees best.

But am I only to believe, may I not also know, that my prayers are answered? There are depths of the human soul where knowing and believing are one, but I will not dwell upon that now. Even on the surface of life belief and knowledge are often practically the same thing. You receive a letter from a friend, you say; and you think you know that he wrote it. But if you examine the facts, you will find that it is belief resting on what seems to you adequate evidence rather than knowledge. Now there are answers of God, the knowledge of which is direct consciousness, as in all spiritual communion. As regards answers to prayer for others, we cannot in the nature of the case have knowledge, but we may often have evidence justifying belief. I say justifying belief, not producing it. Let me explain. Suppose I am in daily contact with a powerful, wise, and loving friend whom I trust utterly. I had said to him, "I wish, if it can be rightly done, that you would do something for certain friends of mine whom you know." I should feel certain that he had granted my request, even though I never knew of my own knowledge, or never learnt from himself or others, that he had done so. The only qualification would be the possibility that to do the

thing I wished would cause more harm than good; only, I should be sure in that case he would not do it, and, therefore, he would be answering *me* in not answering my request. Our consciousness of what God is to us is the ground of our confidence as to what, at our prayer, He will do for others.

7. The Need of Prayer.

But why should there be any praying at all? Why should God wait for our asking?

In many things God does not wait for our asking. The life of prayer in work is the highest we can live; that is, if it be the prayer of a child that loves his Father more than himself. That there should be some things that are not to be had without the asking deepens the delight of life by allowing us the privilege of asking. With respect to others, you will, I think, see that the answer is in the order of nature. Surely there can be no more objection to others being benefited by my prayers than to their being benefited by my work? All our interests are interwoven, and I could not get a blessing on myself without others being the better for it. Why, then, should I not ask directly for a blessing on others?

But the point of my question is, Why should God wait until we have prayed, to bless others? Why should He withhold a blessing from them simply because we have neglected to pray for them?

8. The Answer.

You must not forget that I am speaking of some blessings, not of all. Some are given without any prayer, some on account, it may be, of prayers in the other world. But such is the unity of the great family of man, that it is impossible for us to neglect any duty without making others suffer. Your question, therefore, goes far beyond prayer, and mounts up to this, why should the moral constitution of the world be as it is? Why should one person have it in his power to benefit or injure another? Why should God appoint this? I cannot go into that, I am speaking of facts as they are. And, if it is sad to think what others may lose by our neglect, it is a great joy to be able to bring upon others blessings from God.

LECTURE VII.

THE SUPERNATURAL IN LIMITATION.

1. Introduction.

But how, it may be asked, do we reconcile the qualifying phrases "as loving wisdom sees best," and the like, with the omnipotence of God? A Being to whose power there is no limit can surely answer prayer without being hedged in by conditions. If all things are possible to God, it must be possible to answer once for all the petition: Deliver us from evil!

I think we need not go into the subject of the Absolute Power of God, because that in its own nature could be an object of the indefinite consciousness only. I feel sure that every one knows more of God than he knows that he knows. I mean that every one has of the Divine a consciousness which is above, beneath, through, before, and beyond all expression and all possibility of expression. But though the power of God is unlimited, the manifestation of that power is not: God in creation, in Jesus Christ, in man, is God in limitation. So far as manifestation is concerned, the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity

implies that the Father is limited by the Son, and the Son by Holy Spirit. The Universe, the Incarnation, the Church, and the World are all limitations of God.

2. Limitation as to Method.

A little reflection will convince you that this must be so, and you will see that there is no real incongruity in calling upon man to come up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. So long as law endures, so long must God be subject to law. What is that but to say that God is subject to Himself? To say that it is impossible for God to lie is but to assert His faithfulness to His own laws, *i.e.*, His faithfulness to Himself. Why God has chosen the method of evolution instead of that of a series of specific creations, if, indeed, He has not chosen both, is a question I do not undertake to answer. But it is manifest that with reference to the same thing in the same sense, and at the same time, He could not use both methods. Evolution is not a series of specific creations; a series of specific creations is not evolution. Whichever way is chosen, it excludes from its sphere the other way. Nor will I attempt to say why God has chosen to make man so far like Himself as to have some control over forces, in other words why He has given him what is called free *will*. But it is plain that He could not have made man at once free and not free in the same sense, and at the same time. The employment of

the one method, so far forth, shuts out the employment of the other. Our wisdom in religion, as in science, is to set ourselves to study and obey the will of God, as expressed in all His laws, whether discovered or revealed; whether embodied in he constitution of nature and man, or manifested in the Ministry of Jesus Christ and of the Holy Spirit; whether registered in science and art, or recorded in history and the Bible. As to the absolute origin of evil I am probably as much in the dark as you are. But it seems right to say that on the actual method of the Divine Government it is impossible to prevent, except by slow degrees, "calamities" of nature, or crimes of men. Only, if we accept evolution as taught by Christ, we have the right to believe that evil is being destroyed, that it will at last disappear, and that, meanwhile, it is so overruled as to become an instrument of education and discipline to all who do not finally make it their God.

3. The Obligation to Greatness.

But to confine our attention to limitations of God's ways would be a fatal mistake. The limited suggests the unlimited, the relative suggests the absolute. Nay, rather, at every point in the finite we pass into the infinite. All our search brings us to the Unsearchable; all our finding brings us to Him that cannot be found; for before the search He is in the searcher, and before the finding He is in the finder. God is uncovered by Himself, not discovered

by us. Yet the searching is not in vain, the finding is not an illusion. It is because He is already with us that He may be found, because He is already near that we are to call upon Him. The indefinite consciousness, which we cannot directly control, is full of God ; therefore, in the definite consciousness, which we can directly control, whose laws of attention, study, meditation, repentance, faith, obedience we have learned, we are to seek Him while He may be found, to call upon Him while He is near. The limitations of God are the steps by which we rise. Obedience is ascent. The co-ordination of the definite consciousness with the indefinite gives to the second increasing vividness ; to the first, increasing greatnesss. At every step our strength increases, our view expands. And the heavenly witnesses see that as we rise we change from glory to glory. But we must not allow ourselves to forget that the way of ascent is the way of service. In the present stage, God has limited Himself, as to many blessings, to work through us. Doubtless, He will not, in the other world, permit our neglect to finally injure others. There will be assuredly "compensation" to them. But what can compensate our wrong to Him? How are we to escape the anguished memory of opportunities ignored, of duties neglected? God called upon us to help Him to overcome evil and we refused! How can we deliver our souls from the torture of that memory? There is no way but the way of atonement—an atonement that is not ren-

dered unnecessary, but, on the contrary, is rendered possible, and is demanded, by the atonement of Christ. Do not mistake the sense in which love is all. Love that does not atone is not love.

4. A Strange Story.

Speaking broadly, our difficulties arise from our unwillingness to be great. The compression of religion to suit narrowness makes it impossible to those whose minds are sensitive enough to let God in on all sides. Nothing can be more beautiful than the devotion of narrow piety intensively considered, nothing more revolting considered from the standpoint of extension. The practical belief in special Providence, for example, is of winning loveliness, so long as we look at it only as an instance of trust; it is repulsive to the last degree when we think of it as an implication of favouritism. I once met a lady who calmly and sweetly told me the following story:—"Before my conversion I was fond of amusements, especially of balls. My husband was not converted, but he was a good and patient man. He yielded to my desire to give up the world, but asked me to make an exception in favour of a great annual ball at the house of our dearest friend. When the time came, we received the usual invitations; and I was greatly distressed. I could not think it right to go, and I did not like to refuse. I earnestly prayed God to interpose, so that I could be absent without wounding my husband. Just before the day illness broke out in

the family, the ball was abandoned, and I felt that my prayer was answered. The second and third year I prayed in the same manner, and, in one way or another, I was saved the necessity of refusing. The fourth year my husband died, and I was henceforth free to follow my own feeling of what was right." I may say in passing, and to prevent any misunderstanding, that this lady was one of the kindest-hearted women I ever knew. Specially tender and pitiful to all suffering creatures, and full of readiness and resolve to sacrifice herself for what she believed to be the welfare of others. I told the story shortly after I heard it from her own lips to a clergyman of saintly life, and he saw nothing in it but what was most admirable and edifying. I told it to a layman eminent for his piety, and he was of the same mind. I told it to another clergyman, one who had worked much among men, and it filled him with horror. I told it to another layman, not distinguished for piety, but a just man withal, and he said, "Do you call that religion? It seems to me to make God a murderer!"

5. The Supernatural in Providence.

I make no comment of my own on the above story; but it was startling to find that those who had the greatest reputation for holiness saw in it nothing to condemn, while to the others it seemed nothing short of the most horrible blasphemy. I do not, for my own part, see how any doctrine of Providence that does not embrace the whole life of every one, and so

becomes at the same time individual and universal, can possibly be true. It is not easy, perhaps, to see how, in the narrow range of the State, government can be carried on except by general laws. Even here, general and individual are related, not opposed, terms. The fewer the instances where their individual application fails the more general they are. But when the Power behind is not the State but God, we can say at once that if general laws do not prevent individual existence neither can they prevent individual providence. The true view is that Divine Providence is at once special in the individual and general in the universe. The statement is equally true of design, of evolution, of government, in short, of the entire manifestation of the supernatural. Either God is in everything or He is in nothing. As we say that justice recognises the duties and rights of every man qualified by equal recognition of the duties and rights of every other separately, and of all others collectively, so ought we to interpret Providence as the governing presence of God in every man, qualified by like confession of His presence in every other human being, and in the entire race.

6. The Supernatural in Christ.

To say that all things are a natural manifestation of the supernatural is to deny neither that there is an ascent in the characteristics and order of that manifestation, nor that the highest is as truly natural as the lowest. All things manifest, but all things do

not equally manifest God. All things are in the natural order, but all things have not the same place in that order. It is claimed that the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ is not only highest as manifestation, but also highest as natural. Primæval mist, co-ordinated worlds, living matter, organised life, animal intelligence, human consciousness, moral intuition, universal law, infinite love mark the ascending scale from Creation up to Christ. Having in Him reached the highest, we reach at once the key by which the past is interpreted, and the principle by which the future is directed. In Him the old things disappear that all things may become new—receive a new life and enter on a new growth.

7. The Revelation of Love.

It is sometimes felt that the terms in which the New Testament presents Christ to the world do not altogether justify the assertion of infinite love. But let any one consider, not whether there are difficulties, but whether he can conceive it possible that there should be, under the conditions of human history, a revelation without difficulties. Let him try to formulate the terms of such a revelation for himself. Until he tries he may easily imagine it possible. During or after trial he will probably change his opinion. Partly for my own sake, partly for the sake of others, I have several times tried the experiment. And the conclusion forced upon me has always been that, without a reversal of historic conditions, no clearer

revelation of Divine love could be given. Besides, we must remember that the enlightening guidance of the Holy Spirit is not confined to the New Testament, on the express testimony of that book itself. The limitations under which it was written, and the continuous Divine inspiration since it was written, must be taken into account. So understood there can, I think, be no question that the revelation of God in Jesus Christ is literally a revelation of infinite love.

But I do not ask you to receive these things as "the truth," though I hope you see that the truth cannot be less than these. What I trust you will note is that while interpreting nature in a larger sense, perhaps, than that to which you have been accustomed, I claim that Christianity is in the "natural order ; and that as everything is a manifestation of the supernatural, no objection is valid which is based on its claim to be considered as of supernatural origin. For that is the origin of all things.

8. Summary.

1. The Natural properly means pertaining to Nature.

2. Nature is equivalent to the universe considered as what it has been, is, and is becoming. It therefore includes in itself and its methods all "spirit," "matter," force, life, consciousness, volition, conduct.

3. Whether we include space and time in the universe will depend on the sense in which we use those words. It seems fitting to say that the universe

exists in space and time rather than that the universe is infinite and eternal.

4. Even if infinite and eternal, then, if we admit an Omnipresent Power of which the natural is the manifestation, that Power must be the absolute Infinite, the absolute Eternal.

5. The "supernatural," in any case, can be legitimately used only as signifying that which is superior to nature, *i.e.*, the Omnipresent Power of which nature is the manifestation.

6. It follows that, apart from the question whether time and space as infinite are to be regarded as modes of the Divine existence, the Omnipresent Power and nature are exhaustive terms. Besides these, nothing.

7. It follows that the "natural" order and the "supernatural" order are not two, but one. If we are thinking of the manifestation the order is natural; if we are thinking of the Power manifested it is supernatural.

8. It will not be denied that truth, or rather the knowable, is larger than knowledge; that knowledge is larger than classified knowledge; that nature is larger than the science of nature; and that there have been, and are known phenomena the knowledge of which has not yet been organised into science.

9. Miracles and answers to prayer may, for anything that science can say to the contrary, be real phenomena of this class.

10. They are not, then, "supernatural," except in

the sense in which all the universe is supernatural, *i.e.*, with relation to its cause.

11. The questions to be asked are then, these:—Are they true phenomena? What do they mean? And what are their laws?

12. It is but truth to fact to so order our feeling, thinking, and willing that our consciousness should continually respond to nature not only as to existence, but also as to method, especially in the recognition of the supreme authority of right and the supreme obligation to righteousness.

13. It is but truth to fact to so order our feeling, thinking, and willing that our consciousness should be continuously and proportionately sensitive to the "supernatural" Cause.

14. This continous recognition of the Omnipresent Power—a recognition involving fitting ideas, fitting emotions, and fitting actions, which, when justly developed, become the "Obedience of the Faith"—constitutes the essence of religion.

It is certain that, in the light of the doctrine that all things are in the "natural order," rightly interpreted, the objection of "Naturalism" falls to the ground; and there is, therefore, no longer question as to the possibility, but only as to the actuality of the "facts" on which Christianity is based. It is further certain, from the nature of the case, that only he who is already a Theist, in the sense described, can profitably discuss the claims of Christianity on the intellect, the conscience, the affections, and the will.

LECTURE VIII.

THE SUPERNATURAL IN EVOLUTION.

1. Introduction.

A REMARKABLE lecture on Evolution and Ethics has been given at Oxford by Professor Huxley. It is very interesting to note how this eminent man of science treats questions of Theology. The worst of it is, one can scarcely ever be sure that he is in full possession of the learned professor's mind on these subjects. In science he gives his views very fully and with a lucidity that is little short of marvellous. In theology, also, lucidity there is, but not fulness. He is full enough as to some things he does *not* hold, but the difficulty arises when one seeks to find what he *does* hold. Read only one of his destructive essays and his meaning seems written with a pencil of light. Read another, and you may say the same thing. But now compare these two, and you are at once bewildered. In the one you will find the highest recognition of ethical quality ; in the other you will find what looks like the negation of all ethics in teaching which more than suggests that man is an automaton. A similar contrast is some-

times found within the pages of one and the same essay. I think, however, I shall be right in taking Professor Huxley's abiding meaning to be always that which seems to me highest.

Let us listen very carefully to what Professor Huxley has to say. We are sure to hear something well worth holding fast. The javelins he flings into our midst are decked with gems. He says: "Theodicies have been very popular in their time, and I believe that a numerous, though somewhat dwarfed, progeny of them still survives. So far as I know they are all variations of the theme set forth in those famous six lines of the 'Essay on Man,' in which Pope sums up Bolingbroke's reminiscences of stoical and other speculations of this kind:—

> 'All nature is but art, unknown to thee;
> All chance, direction which thou can'st not see;
> All discord, harmony not understood;
> All partial evil, universal good:
> And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
> One truth is clear, Whatever is, is right.'

Yet, surely, if there are few more important truths than those enunciated in the first triad, the second is open to very grave objections. That there is a 'soul of good in things evil' is unquestionable; nor will any wise man deny the disciplinary value of pain and sorrow. But these considerations do not help us to see why the immense multitude of irresponsible sentient beings which cannot profit by such discipline should suffer; nor why, among the endless possi-

bilities open to omnipotence—that of sinless, happy existence among the rest—the actuality in which sin and misery abound should be that selected. Surely it is mere cheap rhetoric to call arguments which have never yet been answered by even the meekest and least rational of Optimists suggestions of the pride of reason. As to the concluding aphorism, its fittest place would be as an inscription in letters of mud over the portal of some 'Stye of Epicurus,' for that is where the logical application of it to practice would land men with every aspiration stifled and every effort paralysed. Why try to set right what is right already? Why strive to improve the best of all possible worlds? Let us eat and drink, for as to-day all is right, so to-morrow all will be."

2. The Implied Reproach.

I think it is possible to find a meaning in the words "whatever is, is right," not open to this denunciation. Neither Bolingbroke nor Pope, I imagine, ever intended them to be taken as any justification of sin or vice, or as any excuse for indifference or indolence. I should have thought they referred to the moral government of the world, and to the unmistakable "tendency which makes for righteousness." If I am mistaken in this, if Professor Huxley's interpretation be the true one, then, surely one must thank him for the burning scorn which he pours upon the words. In this, he, too, is coming up to the "help of the Lord against the mighty." But it

is not quite so easy to deal with the extra-scientific remark about the endless possibilities open to omnipotence, that of sinless, happy existence among the rest. It is, indeed, an unanswerable question why the immense multitude of irresponsible sentient beings should suffer. But surely our inability to answer that question is not an adequate reason for the suggestion that Omnipotence might have selected another way. It *is* mere cheap rhetoric to call arguments which have never yet been answered suggestions of the pride of reason. But is it not going far beyond what science justifies to speculate upon what omnipotence could or could not do? The problem of animal suffering is one that apparently cannot be solved within the narrow area of the present life. It is true that many writers have, like Wallace, given strong reasons for believing the suffering to be far less than ordinarily supposed; but that, of course, does not explain why there should be any suffering at all. It is one of the points of the mystery of evil as to which we can only say—but surely this is, for the present, enough—I cannot tell why this is; but I have sufficient grounds to trust God, the existence of evil notwithstanding. If I must modify my views, it will not be as to the reality of God's goodness, but as to what is meant by His Omnipotence.

3. The Evolution of Ethics.

Professor Huxley says: "The propounders of what are called the 'ethics of evolution,' when the 'evolu-

tion of ethics' would usually better express the object of their speculations, adduce a number of more or less interesting facts and more or less sound arguments in favour of the origin of moral sentiments, in the same way as other natural phenomena, by a process of evolution. I have little doubt, for my own part that they are on the right track ; but as the immoral sentiments have no less been evolved, there is, so far, as much natural sanction for the one as the other. The thief and the murderer follow nature just as much as the philanthropist. Cosmic evolution may teach us how the good and evil tendencies of man may have come about ; but, in itself, it is incompetent to furnish any better reason why what we call good is preferable to what we call evil than we had before. Some day, I have no doubt, we shall arrive at an understanding of the evolution of the æsthetic faculty ; but all the understanding in the world will neither increase nor diminish the force of the intuition that this is beautiful and that is ugly." Here again a high note is struck. Clearly there is no intention to weaken the authority of conscience. The force of the intuition that this is right and that wrong is not dependent on the history of its origin.

4. The Ethics of Evolution : the Flesh and the Spirit.

You remember St. Paul's words, " So then, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh : for if ye live after the flesh, ye must die ;

but if by the spirit ye mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." Let us now turn to the following words from Mr. Huxley. "There is another fallacy which appears to me to pervade the so-called 'ethics of evolution.' It is the notion that because on the whole, animals and plants have advanced in perfection of organization by means of the struggle for existence and the consequent 'survival of the fittest;' therefore, men in society, men as ethical beings, must look to the same process to help them towards perfection. I suspect that this fallacy has arisen out of the unfortunate ambiguity of the phrase, 'survival of the fittest.' 'Fittest' has a connotation of 'best;' and about 'best' there hangs a moral flavour. In cosmic nature, however, what is 'fittest' depends upon the conditions. Long since I ventured to point out that if our hemisphere were to cool again, the survival of the fittest might bring about, in the vegetable kingdom, a population of more and more stunted and humbler organisms as those which give red snow its colour; while if it became hotter the pleasant valleys of the Thames and Isis might be uninhabitable by any animated beings save those which flourish in a tropical jungle. They, as the fittest and best adapted to the changed conditions, would survive. Men in society are undoubtedly subject to the cosmic process. As among other animals, multiplication goes on without cessation, and involves severe competition for the means of support. The struggle for existence tends to eliminate those less

fitted to adapt themselves to the circumstances of their existence. The strongest, the most self-assertive, tend to tread down the weaker. But the influence of the cosmic process on the evolution of society is the greater the more rudimentary its civilization. Social progress means a checking of the cosmic process at every step, and substitution for it of another, which may be called the ethical process ; the end of which is not the survival of those who may happen to be fittest in respect of the whole of the conditions which exist, but of those which are ethically the best."

We thus come within sight of the great Christian doctrine that we are in this world to combat what is here called the cosmical process, but which in the New Testament is called the Flesh. This contrast of the cosmical and the ethical does not seem to me altogether just. It looks too much as if cosmical and evil were identical terms ; it would surely be better to say that we have a certain power which we ought to use to control the cosmical ; and that for the neglect of such control we must be held answerable. On the whole, knowing, as we do, the sense in which St. Paul uses the words, the terms flesh and spirit seem to respond more accurately to the facts. They retain, I think, all that Professor Huxley really means, without calling upon us to deny that there is a sense in which the cosmos is profoundly moral.

"Let us understand," he says, "once for all, that the ethical progress of society depends, not on imitat-

ing the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it. It may seem an audacious proposal thus to pit the microcosm against the macrocosm, and to set man to subdue nature to his higher ends ; but I venture to think that the great intellectual difference between the ancient times with which we have been occupied and our day, lies in the solid foundation we have acquired for the hope that such an enterprise may meet with a certain measure of success."

5. Man not the "Creature" of Circumstances.

Some of you will remember the socialistic agitation of which Mr. Robert Owen was the honoured and powerful leader. You will remember, also, how frequent, then, was the phrase, "man is the creature of circumstances." It is a doctrine which receives little mercy at the hands of Professor Huxley. "The history of civilization," he says, "details the steps by which men have succeeded in building up an artificial world within the cosmos. Fragile reed as he may be, man, as Pascal says, is a thinking reed : there lies within him a fund of energy, operating intelligently, and so far akin to that which pervades the universe, that it is competent to influence and modify the cosmic process. In virtue of his intelligence, the dwarf bends the Titan to his will. In every family, in every polity that has been established, the cosmic process in man has been restrained and otherwise

modified by law and custom; in surrounding nature it has been similarly influenced by the art of the shepherd, the agriculturist, the artisan. As civilization has advanced, so has the extent of this interference increased, until the organised and highly developed sciences and arts of the present day have endowed man with the command over the course of non-human nature greater than that once attributed to the magicians."

6. The Higher Life.

As I understand Professor Huxley, the word cosmical is used in a peculiar sense, and might almost suggest a certain sympathy with Zoroasterism. But, at least, he recognises as plainly as any one the duty to live nobly, and the impossibility of doing this without strenuous effort. If he will not yet admit the use of praying, he, at least, sees the need of watching.

"As I have already urged, the practice of that which is ethically best—what we call goodness or virtue—involves a course of conduct which, in all respects, is opposed to that which leads to success in the cosmic struggle for existence. In place of ruthless self-assertion it demands self-restraint; in place of thrusting aside or treading down all competitors it requires that the individual shall not merely respect, but shall help his fellows; its influence is directed, not so much to the survival of the fittest, as to the fitting of as many as possible to survive. It repudiates the gladiatorial theory of existence. It demands

that each man who enters into the enjoyment of the advantages of a polity shall be mindful of his debt to those who have laboriously constructed it, and shall take heed that no act of his weakens the fabric in which he has been permitted to live. Laws and moral precepts are directed to the end of curbing the cosmic process and reminding the individual of his duty to the community, to the protection and influence of which he owes, if not existence itself, at least the life of something better than a brutal savage.

"It is from neglect of these plain considerations that the fanatical individualism of our time attempts to apply the analogy of cosmic nature to society. Once more we have a misapplication of the stoic injunction to follow nature; the duties of the individual to the state are forgotten, and his tendencies to self-assertion are dignified by the name of rights. It is seriously debated whether the members of a community are justified in using their combined strength to constrain one of their number to contribute his share to the maintenance of it; or even to prevent him from doing his best to destroy it. The struggle for existence, which has done such admirable work in cosmic nature, must, it appears, be equally beneficial in the ethical sphere. Yet, if that which I have insisted on is true, if the cosmic process has no sort of relation to moral ends, if the imitation of it by man is inconsistent with the first principles of ethics, what becomes of this surprising theory?"

I, of course, do not admit, in the sense in which I

understand the words, that the cosmic process has no relation to moral ends. But it is impossible not to agree with what, I think, Professor Huxley means. It is not to the cosmic process, but to the higher life that we are to look for example and guidance. All such forms of nature worship indicate dissolution, not evolution. We have passed the point where "cosmic process" was absolute. Matter, life, intelligence, moral consciousness mark stages in a long ascent. If we have come to the new starting point where the Son of God descends to take upon Him our nature and to lead us onward for ever, then all going back to lower forms of existence is treachery to Him and ruin to ourselves. Let me add that if one is touched with the pathos of the uncertain hope, one cannot but recognise the high strain, of Mr. Huxley's closing words :—

"We have long since emerged from the heroic childhood of our race, when good and evil could be met with the same 'frolic welcome'; the attempts to escape from evil, whether Indian or Greek, have ended in flight from the battlefield; it remains to us to throw aside the youthful over-confidence and the no less youthful discouragement of nonage. We are grown men, and must play the man,

'Strong in will,
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield,'

cherishing the good that falls in our way, and bearing the evil, in and around us, with stout hearts set on

diminishing it. So far, we all may strive in one faith towards one hope.

> 'It may be that the gulfs will wash us down,
> It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
> . . . but something ere the end,
> Some work of noble note may yet be done.'"

7. The Alternatives.

The unwary thinker might perhaps pardonably conclude that Mr. Huxley regarded this anti-cosmical force on which he lays, very justly, so much stress, as itself outside of evolution. This, however, is not his view. In a note he says: "Of course, strictly speaking, social life and the ethical process, in virtue of which it advances towards perfection, are part and parcel of the general process of evolution, just as the gregarious habit of innumerable plants and animals, which has been of immense advantage to them, is so." Then, after several illustrations, he continues: "To this extent the general cosmic process begins to be checked by a rudimentary ethical process, which is, strictly speaking, part of the former, just as a 'governor' in a steam engine is part of the mechanism of the engine." Let us couple with this the following quotation from the lecture itself: "The theory of evolution encourages no millennial anticipations. If, for millions of years, our globe has taken the upward road, yet, sometime, the summit will be reached and the downward route will be commenced." How are we to interpret these passages? If we have regard to

the general cosmic process alone, there seems no escape from the conclusion that the end will be the equalibration of death.

Let us see what this means. All the sciences, philosophies, and religions of the world are produced by, are manifestations of, the Omnipresent Power. Some of these manifestations are perceived to be of a higher order than others, but all are derived from the same source. The Bible, therefore, is, in every sentence, word, syllable, letter, point, an effect produced on a certain limited area of human consciousness by the so-called Unknowable Power. So also is every other book in the world. Whether there be any distinction of truth and error, right and wrong, or not, both are the product of the same cause, working on the same method of evolution and dissolution. From this standpoint all truth is partially error, all right partially wrong; all error is partially truth, all wrong partially right. Every one believes and lives at every stage in his evolution so far truly and rightly as at that stage is possible to him. If society be in a state of dissolution, each of its members gradually loses the power to believe and live truly and rightly in the higher senses of the words; he sinks into a condition in which progressively lower truenesses and rightnesses —if the phrase may be pardoned—are alone possible to him. But whether the state be higher or lower, it is the effect produced by the Power which evolves or dissolves. Hence he who regards God as a fetich, and lives accordingly, so regards Him truly, so lives

rightly, not simply in the sense that these are the highest thought and life possible to him at the time, but also in the sense that God produced in him that idea and that life. The representation of God given, say, by Robertson, of Brighton, is also true and right; it belongs to a higher order of truths; and in this sense only may, perhaps, be more Divine. It is a higher effect; but there is one and the same Cause in both cases. The doctrine that Jesus Christ was and the doctrine that He was *not*, God are both products of the same so-called Unknowable Power; so, generally, the Catholic Faith and all heresies; established science and all contradictions thereof; in short, whatever is regarded as true and right, and whatever is regarded as untrue and wrong. All the creeds in the world are of God, though some are lower and some are higher. It is He who has originated the conviction that we know Him, and also the conviction that we do not know Him; and this is a higher doctrine than the other! The crimes and the vices, the virtues and heroic deeds of men, are all different forms of the divine—the latter higher, the former lower, aspects of the same thing; but all the product of the Omnipresent Power. To the same source is to be attributed equally the belief and the disbelief in moral freedom.

Here we are face to face with the profoundest and most important necessity that man meets in his whole life. Whether theoretically or not, practically he must choose between the partly free and the

wholly mechanical views of life. I do not deny that even of all the so-called vices, crimes, iniquities, and abominations of the Power that produced man, there might still be this to be said: "These phenomena are, on the principle of evolution, evanescent, and will ultimately disappear altogether." That, I think, is the "highest" that can be concluded from evolution as presented by this class of Agnostics. But, then, that highest is not very high; for these are not the only phenomena that are ultimately to disappear. Suppose that they are, at last, completely displaced by virtue, justice, righteousness, and all loveliness, yet these in their turn vanish, and there is nothing left but the Omnipresent Power, amorphous matter, and motionless force. But, if this be so, let us not weakly close our eyes to the result. Let us honestly confess that all this amounts to the absolute negation of truth and right, *i.e.*, to the destruction of the very foundations on which philosophy and science themselves repose.

If, however, we emphasize the ethical force which, in his view, acts against the cosmical process, there would seem room to believe that Professor Huxley sees in this some ground for the hope contained in the second of the two lines he quotes:—

> "It may be that the gulfs will wash us down,
> It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles."

The force which modifies the cosmic process is not man's alone. That process itself and the ethical force

which controls it are from the Incomprehensible Power of whom the universe as it has been, is, and is becoming, is the manifestation. And there seems no reason to deny that the ethical force which is visibly present in man is invisibly present in the infinite depths of space, preparing the new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness. Thus the words I have quoted, joined to those other words which recognize the authority of intuition, appear to justify the hope that no summit will be reached that does not point to a higher, and no downward route will be taken that does not lead to a loftier ascent. This hope might be based on the Professor's own words.

The supreme manifestation of the ethical force is found, as I think Mr. Huxley would not hesitate to admit, in Jesus Christ. If He indeed be God manifest in the flesh, the ethical force that flows from Him may be trusted to modify the Cosmic Process so as to secure perpetuity of life. Hence one may see, from a possibly new point of view, the meaning of the words, "I go to prepare a place for you;" a place for you, and therefore for yours; a place for continuous thought, feeling, will, imagination, fancy, emotion, poetry, literature, art, science, unbroken fulness of the love that is life, and unceasing gladness of the life that is work. So considered, the problem of pain may appear as a part of the preparation. Its disciplinary value will thus extend beyond the present. The ethical force, which so modifies the

cosmic process beyond us as to prepare the new place, is at the same time so modifying the cosmic process around us and within us, as to enable the spirit to ultimately triumph over the flesh, and so prepare us as well as the place. And the enormous durations which evolution implies suggest that the totality of human pain, as compared with the future "sinless and happy" existence of man, may last no longer than a schoolboy's fugitive smart from a single stroke. After all, evolution itself, in its recognition of ethical force modifying cosmic process, must come to regard that which is for a moment as but a light affliction compared with the eternal fulness of glory, being and to be, revealed in us.

8. Summary.

1. Evolution is a method or process, not a force.

2. It is a method in which the Omnipresent Power works.

3. It includes the operation of ethical force.

4. This ethical force modifies cosmic processes.

5. This ethical force is a manifestation of the Omnipresent Power.

6. There is no reason to confine the operation of the ethical force to our globe.

7. As the Being whom it manifests is omnipresent, analogy suggest that the modification of the cosmic processes by ethical force may be going on throughout the universe.

8. It is thus not improbable that there may be

even now in preparation what are called the new heavens and the new earth.

9. As the ethical force modifies cosmic process in other respects, it is possible it may modify it in the sense of our preparation for the new heavens and the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

10. As ethical results are of higher rank than cosmic process, the latter, so far as painful, may be borne with patience for the sake of the former.

11. If the ethical force secures perpetual continuity of "sinless and happy existence," then, in the increasing range of continued life, our time of pain, by comparison, becomes constantly less, while that for which the pain existed becomes constantly greater.

12. As to whether ethical force similarly works in the case of all forms of sentient life, the evidence is scanty ; but it seems permissible to believe it.

The philosophy of evolution renders it certain that the action of the ethical force which modifies cosmical process, cannot be less than that set forth in the Catholic Faith and by the Catholic Church. Unless, therefore, the agnostic can find and live a higher presentation of the truth, he cannot escape the obligation in the direction of Catholicism, implied in the principle that one ought to be and do the highest he knows.

THE SECOND SERIES.

LECTURE I.

CERTAINTY AS FAITH IN TRUTH AND RIGHT. (*a*).

1. Introduction.

Let us now consider what we mean when we say anything is true or right. As every one knows, there are ideas which are taken for granted; ideas which are in all minds, however they got there; ideas which need no proof, and without which no proof is possible. The idea of beauty seems to be one of these; the idea of trueness is another; the idea of rightness is yet another. If you wish to get a man to be or do something which is called moral, you try to show him the thing is right, and you imply that what is right he ought to be and do. And in proving any statement, what is it you wish? Your wish is to prove the statement true, and you take for granted that what is true ought to be believed. A like remark may be made about beauty. It is certain that you cannot define, in the sense of full explanation, truth, or right, or beauty. Your ideas of these may rise daily, there seems no bound to the possible ascent; but, just for this reason, com-

plete statement is out of the question. The fact is that you know these, from point to point, so well that you see, at every stage, there is much more than can be told. These, by which you judge everything else, are not themselves judged by anything. They are what are called ultimates.

2. Trueness and Rightness.

Nevertheless, it is useful to dwell upon what we mean when we say anything is true or right. We may consider with great advantage the aspect of correspondence. That is not so simple a word as trueness or rightness, but it serves to bring out what it is we are thinking of when anything is compared with something else. I suppose you will see at once that you cannot compare without having a standard of some kind. Put beside each other two stones. You say they are like. Here, then, you have an idea of likeness which becomes your standard. But like in what? Are they of the same sort? Then you have for your standard likeness in quality. Are they of the same size? Then you have for your standard likeness in quantity. Are they of the same weight? Then, though it may need a little thought to see this, you have for your standard likeness in force. You will see at once that if they are not of the same sort, size, or force, it is still by the standards of sort, size, and force, that you are judging them. So that the principle which runs through all your thinking about them is correspondence with a standard. And you

might add that you imply this axiom or statement so clear that it needs no proof, things which are like the same thing are like one another. (The other side is not, of course, that things which are unlike the same thing are unlike one another; for two things may be wholly unlike a third, and yet like each other.) The point to be noted is that in all judgment the principle is—correspondence with a standard.

3. Trueness in Words and Thoughts.

Now let us test this in the case of words and thoughts. We need not dwell, at present, on what are called the defects of language. You will grant that everyone has thoughts for which he fails to find the right words, that is, the words that fit or correspond. When we say the terms do not express the idea in the speaker's mind, we mean that they do not correspond with the idea, and are in this sense untrue, though they may express accurately enough an idea he did not intend. What we feel, as in the common phrase, "One ought to say what one means," is that there ought to be correspondence between words and thoughts. Let us now take the case of thought itself. When one says of another he has false ideas, he means ideas that do not correspond with some standard that he has before his mind. What he is thinking of may be what are called facts, and the connections of facts. And this, I believe, holds good all round. There is always some standard

by agreement with which we test ideas. We may have a mistaken standard, and as soon as the mistake is discovered, we must set the matter right; but we never for a moment question that a standard there must be, and that correspondence therewith is the test of trueness and rightness. The standard itself can only be judged by correspondence with some other standard until we get back or down to those last things or ultimates that we cannot but believe true or right. The question really becomes, as regards things and relations, one of existence or non-existence, and as regards thought, feeling, volition, one of correspondence or non-correspondence.

It is, perhaps, unfortunate that we have no word for belief and feeling exactly corresponding to knowledge, for what is not known truly is not regarded as *known*; whereas, a belief or a feeling is still a belief or a feeling whether true or not. In one sense, however, it is, I think, legitimate to regard knowledge as co-extensive with consciousness, as including, therefore, thought, feeling, and whatever else consciousness contains. Whatever we are conscious of, we know; whatever we are definitely conscious of, we definitely know. But, of course, we have to distinguish consciousness of self from consciousness of not-self. And, in the case of belief, what we are directly conscious of is, ordinarily, the belief itself, and we have to ascertain whether it is well founded or not. I say "ordinarily" because there are fundamental beliefs which may be called forms of con-

sciousness, in which we do not think of the beliefs as beliefs, but of the truths which are called self-evident. Here, at least, belief and knowledge seem to be one. But we need not dwell longer on this. It is enough to see clearly what trueness and untrueness are.

4. Trueness as Absolute and as Obligatory.

So far then as we see things as they are, we see truly. Whether any one sees truly in the largest sense depends upon whether God is conscious or not. If He is, there is a consciousness which corresponds with all—other than God—as it has been, as it is, as it is becoming, as it will be. The trueness of the Divine consciousness is in this way perfect. But there is, also, that which is suggested by our self-consciousness—God's consciousness of God. Then, absolute trueness is God's trueness to Himself. But if there be no God, or if God be not conscious, then, of course, there can be no absolute truth in the sense here described. That existence and relation are of enormous, if not infinite, extent and duration, Science has made certain; and it seems difficult to believe that there is in God no consciousness that corresponds to the universe and to Himself at all points. If there is, then that consciousness is absolutely true.

But here we have to consider a subject of the profoundest importance. I suppose everyone feels, more or less intensely, that consciousness *ought* to correspond with existence. Trueness is not felt to be

simply an advantage, but, also, an obligation. Whether directly or indirectly produced, the feeling is unquestionably the product of the Omnipresent Power—the Power manifested in all phenomena. If that Power be conscious and self-conscious, one can see that this feeling of obligation on our part is a way of securing response to that Power. It does not seem otherwise possible to account for its existence. But if this be its end we can see that there is union between us and God, so far as we acknowledge and act on the obligation. We cannot but feel that it is of God's perfectness that His consciousness should completely correspond to Himself and to existence; and if our consciousness also corresponded to Him, to ourselves, to the universe, we should in our degree be perfect as He is. If we can more fully learn His ways of looking at things, if, in other words, revelation be possible, then can we almost at a bound find the standpoint from which we may begin to know even as also we are known. If the universe be indeed a *universe*, there must be some one point from which it is best regarded, and that point must surely be the sight-point of God. To reach this, and see from this, must then be measurelessly more important than accumulation of details in our knowledge. And, I think, the feeling of obligation that consciousness should correspond with existence and relation is best interpreted thus. It is, then, correspondence with Him, in whom all live and move and have their being. Thus, trueness to God is the condition of

knowledge of the universe from the sight-point of rational unity. But, then, it is not for the sake of knowledge of the universe, but for its own sake that trueness to God must be sought. It is infinitely more important to know God, if such knowledge be possible, than to know the universe. Yet it is impossible, if God be, to truly know either without knowing the other.

5. Trueness and Rightness in the Universe.

Is trueness a quality of the universe? If so, it must be because it corresponds to the consciousness of Him by Whom it is produced, by Whom it is being produced. It follows from the inexhaustibleness of God that the future must transcend beyond all power of imagination the past and the present; and that the only possibility of being essentially true is by correspondence with Him from Whom all proceeds. If in any way we can become united with the Purpose that is fulfilling itself in all evolution, if, as I have said, we can take the divine sight-point, then are we true, not in correspondence of consciousness with multitudinous detail, but in correspondence with the Fountain from which all being flows. The trueness of the universe is its correspondence with its source; it is the faithfulness of God to Himself in the eternal fulfilling of His perfect purpose; the trueness of man is correspondence with God.

From this point of view, trueness and rightness (and, I may add, beautifulness) are essentially one.

The difference of aspect finds its turning point in the feeling of obligation to be true already pointed out. Trueness, or correspondence, may be considered simply as a fact; it may be considered also as an obligation. It is under this aspect that it is called rightness. We ought to think, feel, believe truly; that is, our thought, feeling, belief, in a word, our consciousness ought to correspond with existence and relation, and with their source—God. Consciousness covers also will and conduct; trueness of will, trueness of conduct, is correspondence as a fact; rightness of will, rightness of conduct is correspondence as an obligation. It is practically the same thing to say correspondence with the will of God. Here, again, rises our need of revelation. If we are to be in harmony with Him, He must, in some way, tell us what His will is, whether by reason, *i.e.*, the mind perceiving relations as true, by conscience, *i.e.*, the mind perceiving relations as right, or by Christ, teaching and living, and thus manifesting both. It follows that unright is non-correspondence with the will of God—the Perfect.

If rightness, also, be a quality of the universe as well as of consciousness and conduct, it must be because there is to God as to us that which ought to be. The universe has then its quality of rightness as correspondence with the evolving moral purpose of Him from Whom it is flowing. Hence there is really a tendency that makes for righteousness; for all the laws of the universe, as the expression of a Moral

Being, are themselves moral. Hence, too, those who unconsciously obey are unconsciously moral, and though the morality which does not recognise God is defective it is yet real. To deny the morality of Atheists who do not wilfully depart from rectitude is to furnish them with the best argument for their Atheism. For what it means is that morality does not depend on God, but on belief in God, which is not only an altogether false, but also an extremely dangerous doctrine. The very contrary is the right way. The Atheist ought to argue from the morality that is his to the source from which that morality comes. One ought to believe in a righteous God because He is, not because of the subjective effect of the belief.

6. Untrueness and Unrightness.

Let us now consider what is meant by untruth and unright, and we may well start with one example which needs to be specially noted. I mean the failure to carefully study and systematically recall the things we ought to believe and do. Every one would do well to have a clearly written and carefully preserved list of *memoranda et agenda*. A large proportion of vital beliefs and necessary duties are never studied at all, and it is very much left to "chance" whether they are so much as thought of now and again. I suppose the sense of duty cannot be strong where the memory is so weak. Still, "evil *is* wrought from want of thought as well as want of heart," and

if we would put down in plain and prominent writing, and keep it in a place where we must often see it, an honest list of all the things we ought to believe and do, that fact would tend mightily to produce in us a happier state of conscience, and in society a much higher condition of life and conduct.

7. Kinds of Errors.

According to our standpoint, error may be called the partially true or the partially not true. The more complete statement is the partially true and the partially not true. But here, for convenience sake, let errors stand for ideas and beliefs not true *so far as not true.* And, as men may easily believe things that are not true without their knowing that they are not, these beliefs may be classed as *unconscious errors.*

In so far as errors are wholly conscious and deliberately uttered they are lies, and belong to the sphere of our second subject. Not many, I think, have tried to impose on the world a system or principle of whose error, as a whole, they were conscious ; but I am afraid it is impossible to resist the conclusion that men have lied on behalf of what they believed to be true. The ardour of their conviction, their intense feeling of the immense importance of the thing they believed, justified them, I suppose, in their own eyes, in misrepresenting, or even inventing facts. It is a familiar experience that the necessity of presenting what is, on the whole, a true

picture makes some men careless as to accuracy of detail, and when to this is added the feeling already described, imagined events are sure to make their appearance. But though in the aspect of falsehoods they belong to the second subject, in the aspect of errors they belong to the first. As all lies are errors, though not all errors are lies, they must be here classed as *conscious errors.*

There is also half-conscious error. A man may have a feeling that there is something not exactly true in the things he believes, that there is somewhere in his principles or system a defect or an excess, something that fails to reach or passes beyond the truth, without realizing what that something is. So, too, he may have an apprehension that the facts are not in all respects exactly as he represents them, without any distinct consciousness of where or what the inaccuracy is. It is remarkable with what ease men will accept as facts things which fall in with what they already believe to be true. As these are accepted simply because of their supposed agreement with what is already believed, we might call them, from the standpoint of purpose, congruous errors; but, keeping to the one principle of division, we must call them *half-conscious errors.*

There is a difference easier to feel than to express between mistakes and error. What I want to convey is something like this: A man's principles may be true and just, but he may make a mistake in their application. Thus, for example, a man's principles of

arithmetic may be perfectly sound, and yet in a given case he may, from some passing inattention, fail to work out a sum correctly. But if his system is erroneous he will arrive at a wrong result, though there be no mistake in the working. Of the latter, the history of theology, philosophy, and science affords many illustrations. In like manner, one may be quite right as to a fact, but wrong either as to accompanying circumstances, or as to the way in which, in some detail, he interprets the fact. When he is wrong as to the system, principle, or fact, I call that an error; when he is only wrong as to a particular application or interpretation of the system, principle, or fact, I call that a mistake. If any one likes, he can term the first *essential*; the second, *accidental* error. But in whatever way, the distinction must be made.

There is, further, the question of unnoticed errors in the reception of truth. We need not consider those which do not come within the immediate range of the teacher. But what about those which are closely connected with—in some sense occasioned by—the teaching? It is impossible, one would say, to teach anything without being misunderstood by somebody. It can hardly be said that it is possible to remove all such misapprehensions; in fact, one may say they are, in a sense, a necessity. Besides, one has to consider the comparative importance of misunderstandings. If in correcting insignificant mistakes one loses the opportunity of imparting important truths,

it would seem to be one's duty to let the mistakes alone. These may be called *incidental errors.*

8. Errors Classified.

We have, then, the following classes ; Errors are—

(*a*) As regards Consciousness. 1. Unconscious 2. Conscious or auxiliary. 3. Half-conscious or congruous.

(*b*) As regards their nature. 1. Essential. 2. Accidental. 3. Incidental.

(*a*) Consciousness. 1. Unconscious errors are those which they who hold them do not know to exist. 2. Conscious errors are those which the holders knowingly retain. 3. Half-conscious errors are those which the holders have hastily admitted with slight questioning because of seeming agreement with things already held as true.

(*b*) As regards their nature. 1. Essential errors are those which relate to the system, principle, or fact itself. 2. Accidental errors are those which relate to the application of the system or principle and to the circumstances or interpretation of the fact. 3. Incidental errors, which are not, however, strictly a distinct class, are those which arise in the reception or apprehension of the truth itself, and are marked by the fact that they are incident to the effort to accommodate the mind to larger or higher views.

LECTURE II.

CERTAINTY AS FAITH IN TRUTH AND RIGHT. (*b*).

I. Introduction.

We have now to pursue a parallel course in noticing several kinds of unrightnesses. The more vividly these are felt, their true character recognised, the more we shall testify to the authority of moral intuition ; that is to say the preception of their wrongness is a witness to the intuition of right by comparison with which the wrongness is perceived to be wrongness.

II. Classes of Wrongs.

Unrightnesses may be classified as follows :—

(*a*) Consciousness. 1. Unconscious. 2. Conscious. 3. Half-conscious.

(*b*) Nature. 1. Essential. 2. Accidental. 3. Incidental.

(*a*) Consciousness. 1. Unconscious unrightnesses are those which the wrong liver does not know to exist. As every one so far recognises truth and his own relation to truth as to become aware that

he has been in a state of error, or has made mistakes, so every one so far recognises right and his own relation to right as to become aware that he has been in a state of unright or has done wrong. In both cases the intensity of his feeling will depend on his estimate of the nature and importance of the truth or of the right which he has failed to reach, or against which he has acted. Very soon he will learn to suspect that there may be as yet unknown aspects of trueness and of rightness in regard to which he may be found wanting. As he himself advances, fresh phases of truth and right will dawn on his consciousness, like new stars coming into the field of vision. Looking back, he will feel how unlike his life has been to what he now sees it ought to have been. The things done, or the states existing, in this ignorance, we distinguish as *unconscious wrongs*.

2. Conscious unrightnesses, whether states or deeds, are not clearly at all points parallel to conscious errors. It would seem that a man can scarcely be said to be in a *state* of conscious error; for to be conscious of the error implies that he sees the truth, else, how could he know the error to be error? Yet, may it not be possible for a man to be conscious that he is drifting without knowing whither? And may not a man be in a state of wilful blindness or ignorance? Though a man cannot be properly said to really believe what he perceives to be false, he may, from indolence or fear, persist in a belief which he, at

times, suspects to be ill-founded. Besides, his present unconsciously wrong belief may be the result of conscious neglect, of "culpable carelessness," in the past. Then it must not be forgotten that voluntary vice tends to produce incapacity to believe. He may, therefore, quite truly say, "I cannot believe," and yet be exceedingly blameworthy. The incapacity of the present may be the result of the vice of the past. We need not, however, pursue further this point. Whatever qualifications may be necessary in the case of belief, it is certain that a man can be in a state of conscious unrightness, that he can consciously think, feel, will, or act wrongly. These states and acts may be designated *conscious unrightnesses*.

Then there is the condition, only too sadly familiar, in which men, whether as to state or deed, have the feeling of something worse than imperfection—the feeling that the right has not been reached or that the wrong has been done, though unable to say precisely in what. In many cases dim consciousness would become vivid if we only kept in our hands, by a right method faithfully used, the threads by which memory may be moved. Whether by sub-conscious action of the mind, the suggestions of guardian spirits, or the more immediate influence of the Holy Ghost, we have, I think, numerous half-hints when we are turning towards untrueness and unrightness; and doubtless these hints would become to us much more vivid and pronounced were we in the habit of listening intently for the still small voice. But at all

events there are half perceived duties which we have not performed. Wrongs of this class may be called *half-conscious unrightnesses.*

(*b*) *Nature.* 1. *Essential unrightness.* The common character of all unrightness is, as we have seen, non-correspondence with self, the universe, man and God as moral. But by what is here called essential unright I do not mean simply that there is less correspondence than non-correspondence. There are certain moral principles which, like certain "mathematical truths," must hold good for ever; they are "necessary" in the sense that we cannot conceive their negative. To be in harmony with these is to be essentially right; to be out of harmony with these is to be essentially wrong. To those who believe in the God of Christ, harmony with Him is the all of right, unharmony with Him the all of wrong. To be right with Him is to be right, to be wrong with Him is to be wrong, with self, the universe, and man. But here there must be some qualification. Not now taking into account our power over ourselves; self, the universe, and man are constitutionally and structurally moral, as proceeding from a moral originator. If, then, one is true to self, the universe, and man as moral, he is, so far, essentially, though defectively, right. Such a one corresponds with God without knowing it. To be conscious of God without recognising that it *is* God of whom we are conscious is a great deal, and may lead to much more—the blessed consciousness of God as God. But in any

case he who is in sympathy with right as right is essentially different from him who is not in sympathy with right as right.

2. *Accidental Unrightness.*—In this case one's principles are right, but one either fails in certain points to carry them out, or carries them out in a mistaken way. As we have already seen, this often rises from carelessness, or thoughtlessness, so grave as to be criminal, and is so far forth a case of being out of sympathy with the right. But it often rises also from no disloyalty to principle, but from weakness or misapprehension. Yet let no one imagine that any action wrong in itself ever becomes right simply because it is well meant. The question of motive is one of internal correspondence, the question of action one of external correspondence; neither can be a substitute for the other; and conduct as right includes both.

3. *Incidental Unrightnesses.*—These are not strictly a separate class, but the same as the preceding from another point of view. They are here regarded as incidental to the effort of adjusting one's consciousness and conduct to higher aspects of existence and relation.

The Inference.

The words truth and right, as we have seen, imply a standard of which we are supposed to be conscious, and correspondence with which constitutes trueness or rightness. Ultimate objective truth, right, beauty

must surely be the truth, right, beauty of God ; but as these *are* ultimates—whether of God or of a universe without God—they can be recognised, but not defined. So put, trueness, rightness (and also beautifulness) is correspondence of consciousness with existence and relation not only as being, but also as being true, right, and beautiful.

For my own part I can attach no meaning to this that does not bring me to God, and to beautifulness, trueness, rightness as correspondence with Him ; but, for the present, it is enough that we feel deeply how all certainty implies faith in this three-sided ultimate, Beauty, Truth, and Right.

3. Analytical Statement of Both Classes.

For those who desire a closer examination of the subject, the following analytical statement will, it is hoped, prove useful. It will be observed that in this tabular form the order is trueness and rightness ; but, except as a matter of convenience, it is of no importance which comes first.

4. Trueness and Untrueness as Correspondence and Non-Correspondence.

State of Consciousness.	Being as unlimited. Space as unlimited. Time as unlimited.

If there exist Being, Space, Time as unlimited, and if we so apprehend Being, Space, Time, then our

apprehension has the quality of trueness; there is correspondence of the state of consciousness with existence. (Actual affirmative judgment which is true.)

Again: State of Consciousness. { Not Being as unlimited. / Not Space as unlimited. / Not Time as unlimited.

If there is not unlimited Being, Space, Time, and we thus believe, our belief has the quality of trueness; there is the correspondence of the state of consciousness with non-existence. (Actual negative judgment which is true.)

Once more: State of Consciousness. { Not Being as unlimited. / Not Space as unlimited. / Not Time as unlimited.

If there is *not* Being, Space, Time, as unlimited, and we think there is, then we think not truly; the state of consciousness does not correspond with non-existence; there is the quality of untrueness. (Actual affirmative judgment which is untrue.)

So also: State of Consciousness. { Being as unlimited. / Space as unlimited. / Time as unlimited.

If there *is* Being, Space, Time as unlimited, and we think there is *not*, we think not truly; the state of consciousness does not correspond with existence. (Actual negative judgment which is not true.)

But there is another aspect of the subject which must be taken into account.

If there is Being, Space, Time as unlimited, or as not unlimited, and we have no thought at all on the subject, the state of consciousness does not correspond with existence or with non-existence. In the preceding cases the thought was supposed to be actual, and to correspond, or not correspond, with existence or non-existence ; here we are supposed to have *no* thought on the subject. Hence :—

	Existence.
State of Consciousness.	Being as unlimited.
	Space as unlimited.
	Time as unlimited.

Here the correlative state of consciousness, affirmative thought, is simply non-existent.

Once more :

	Non-Existence.
State of Consciousness.	Not Being as unlimited.
	Not Space as unlimited.
	Not Time as unlimited.

Here again the correlative state of consciousness—negative judgment—is simply non-existent.

This may be called, in both cases, untrueness—not of the thought, which as non-existent cannot be appropriately called either true or not true, but of the thinker. For here it is not that the existing states of consciousness are, relatively to their objects, true or untrue ; but that certain states of consciousness, which, in order to agreement with existence (or non-existence), need to be present, are not present.

5. Recapitulation.

We have then :—

1. Actual Affirmative thought which is true : correspondence.

2. Actual Negative thought which is true : correspondence.

3. Actual Affirmative thought which is not true : non-correspondence.

4. Actual Negative thought which is not true : non-correspondence.

5. Absence of Affirmative thought : absence of correspondence.

6. Absence of Negative thought : absence of correspondence. So also with feeling and belief.

If we substitute *defect* for *non-existence* the same principle will apply. For *in so far* as the thought is defective it is non-existent. We have thus :

7. Defect of Affirmative thought—partial absence in the sense of not corresponding to the *whole* existence.

8. Defect of Negative thought—partial absence in the sense of not corresponding to the whole non-existence.

The last point may need a word of illustration. Suppose there be *no* "spirits." To hold that there are no *evil* spirits does not cover the whole non-existence. The thought is untrue, only in the sense of defect. To make it correspond altogether with the non-existence, one must hold there are no spirits of any kind—evil, or good, or neither.

Put in a slightly different form we have :—

Thought	Affirmative / Negative	corresponding with	existence / non-existence	true.
Thought	Affirmative / Negative	*not* corresponding with	non-existence / existence	not true.
Absence of thought, *i.e.*,	Affirmative / Negative	absence of correspondence	existence / non-existence	absence of trueness.
Defect of thought, *i.e.*,	Affirmative / Negative	defect of correspondence with	existence / non-existence	defect of trueness.

6. Condensed Summary.

Hence :—

I. Trueness : correspondence of consciousness with existence and non-existence.

II. Untrueness : non-correspondence of consciousness with existence and non-existence.

(*a*) Thinking that that is which is not.

(*b*) Thinking that that is not which is.

(*c*) Not thinking that that which is is. } 1. Complete absence of thinking.

(*d*) Not thinking that that which is not is not. } 2. Partial absence of thinking.

And so of feeling and beliefs.

7. Rightness and Unrightness as Correspondence and Non-correspondence.

Consciousness and conduct	Willing / Feeling / Believing / Thinking / Doing	Affirming	What God wills to be	Corresponding, or Right.
		Negating	What God wills not to be	

Consciousness and conduct	Willing, Feeling, Believing, Thinking, Doing	Affirming	What God wills	Non-corresponding, or Unright, in sense of anti-corresponding.)
		Negating	not to be; What God wills to be	
Absence of consciousness and conduct	Willing, Feeling, Believing, Thinking, Doing	not Affirming	What God wills to be; What God wills not to be	Absence of correspondence, or absence of Rightness.
		not Negating		
Defect of consciousness and conduct	Willing, Feeling, Believing, Thinking, Doing	Imperfectly Affirming	What God wills to be; What God wills not to be	Defect of correspondence, or defect of Rightness.
		Imperfectly Negating		

More briefly :—

I. Rightness : correspondence of consciousness and conduct with the will of God.

II. Unrightness : non-correspondence of consciousness and conduct with the will of God.

(*a*) Willing, etc., that to be which God wills not to be.

(*b*) Willing, etc, that not to be which God wills to be.

(*c*) Not willing, etc., that to be which God wills to be. — 1. Complete absence of willing, etc.

(*d*) Not willing, etc., that not to be which God wills not to be. — 2. Partial absence of willing, etc.

But, as I have said, to be in harmony with the will of God is to be in harmony with God.

Hence :—

I. Rightness is the correspondence, considered as fulfilment of obligation, of consciousness and conduct with God.

II. Unrightness is the non-correspondence, considered as non-fulfilment of obligation, of consciousness and conduct with God.

8. Summary.

As before, I throw into such form as I should employ for myself the certainties, acknowledged or implied, with which we have so far dealt.

1. I see that faith in Beauty, Truth, and Right is fundamental, and is common to all earnest feeling, thinking, and willing whether in religion or in science.

2. I see that just as the beauty of anything is sufficient reason for admiration, so is the truth of anything sufficient reason for belief, the right of anything sufficient reason for approval.

3. I am conscious that I "ought" to be beautiful and put away unbeauty ; that I ought to be true, and put away untruth ; that I ought to be right, and put away unright.

4. I see that, so far as each recognises, as ultimates, Beauty, Truth, and Right, or in the order of actual inquiry, truth, right, beauty, so far there is ground common to religion and science ; and that, in fact, in the experience which precedes differentiation, they are not two but one.

5. I see that the recognition of these ultimates implies that dueness or oughtness is absolute, in the sense that ignorance does not abolish obligation. I ought to be and do—that is, it is fitting, owing, due—that I should be and do what is beautiful, true, right, even if my consciousness does not at present respond to these.

6. It follows that it is necessary to distinguish two kinds of obligation, the one called absolute, the other called relative; the first referring to the dueness in itself; the other to the dueness in its relation to knowledge and power.

7. Postponing for the present this distinction, I see plainly enough, as everyone must see who thinks at all, that so far as that which the Catholic Faith sets forth is beautiful, I am under obligation to admire; so far as it is true, I am under obligation to believe; so far as it is right, I am under obligation to obey.

I ought to recognise, both theoretically and practically, Beauty, Truth, and Right as authoritative ultimates, without which neither Science nor Religion has any validity; and I ought to confess that the "intuition" of or "belief in" these ultimates constitutes what may be called the foundation faith of both Religion and Science.

LECTURE III.

CERTAINTY AS SCIENTIFIC. (*a.*)

1. Introduction.

Professor Jevons, Mr. Balfour, and others have challenged Science as not having proved many of the theories it promulgates with great confidence. But in such cases the fault is in the scientists rather than in the method. It is true, however, that the latter may be taken in too narrow a sense. The method of science is really the method of definitely knowing the definitely knowable; and one of its first assumptions is that there are knowable likenesses and differences.

2. Differentiation and Assimilation of Things.

There is a big word—differentiation—which one would gladly avoid if one could. There is another—assimilation—not quite so long. It will save time, however, to use these two words, notwithstanding their length, if we take the trouble of giving them at once plain and fixed meanings. Let us, then, understand by assimilation making similar, by differentiation making different, and this as regards both things

and thoughts. As to things. Suppose we have before us a mass of clay and a model. We take up a portion of the clay and shape it into the likeness of the model; that is assimilation. Now let us take another mass and a new model, and shape this second mass into the likeness of the second model. This is still assimilation as regards the pattern before us; but it is differentiation as regards the previous pattern. For example, in the first instance we have shaped the clay into a vase, in the second into a cup. Each resembles its own model; but each differs from the other.

3. Differentiation and Assimilation of Thoughts.

As to thoughts. Here we suppose things like or unlike each other, and we wish to make our thoughts correspond to the likeness or the unlikeness. This is the principle that runs through classification, a long word, but easily understood as arrangement into classes. It is perceived, for example, that certain masses of matter resemble each other in height, and, having settled on some standard, we agree that all which come up to, or exceed that standard should be called mountains; and that other masses which are high, but not high enough for the first class, should be called hills. If you will think a moment, you will see that we have here both assimilation and differentiation; but not in quite the same sense as before. I do not say that there is resemblance between thoughts

and things. Your idea of a mountain is not materially like the mountain, or of a hill, like the hill. If it were, then your idea of the mountain or of the hill could be measured with a chain, and compared as to altitude, angularity, position, form, and so forth. But though we cannot in this sense use the word like, we can use the word correspondence. Thus, if on examination you find that what you supposed a mountain is only a hill, you modify your idea that it may correspond with the fact. Or to take a more familiar illustration. You are asked the width of a street, and you answer forty feet. On actually stepping it you find it is over fifty. You change your idea to make it fit the fact. Now this is what, from this point of view, is meant by the assimilation and differentiation of thoughts. There is another point of view, with which we are not at present concerned, from which thoughts are regarded as things. But here we have to do with the correspondence of thoughts and things. When we come to perceive the similarities of things, that is assimilation ; when we come to perceive the differences of things, that is differentiation.

4. The General Function of Science.

Of course, whenever there is likeness between two things there must be some difference, were it only of degree in force, position in space, or succession in time, else we could not know that they were two ; and in the difference of two things there must be some likeness, were it only in the fact of existence, else they

could not be compared at all. It may be broadly said that the whole process of science is finding out, verifying, and classifying likenesses and differences in each department, and that the science of sciences has for its function the finding out, verifying, and classifying the general likenesses and differences which are presented by all the departments. Perhaps, I may add, the proper function of philosophy, if the word may be used in this sense, is to furnish the principles whose universal presence constitutes the nearest possible approach to that unity which the Catholic faith proclaims.

5. The Differentiation of Religion and Science.

The use of these two words implies that they are not at all points the same. We have already seen how that trinity of consciousness called beauty, truth, and right, is taken for granted by all sorts and conditions of men. We have seen that to perceive the beauty, truth, and right of anything is sufficient reason for admiration, belief, and obedience. Now besides those things which men in general already perceive to be beautiful, true, and right, there are other things whose beauty, truth, and right are at present perceived only by a few. The few feel that the perception *ought* to become common; the feeling is not that it is desirable, but that it is *owing*. They may not, perhaps, themselves perceive to Whom it is owing; they would possibly speak of what rather than Whom.

But as to the feeling of the *owingness*, there can be no question. It is in part the spring of many of those vehement attacks on Christianity which perplex and puzzle so many Christians by their apparent uselessness. It is in part the motive of Atheism, Positivism, Agnosticism, Pantheism, Spiritualism, Theosophy, and, broadly, of Scepticism and Freethought. And it is unquestionably the most powerful motive of men of science in general. The proclamation not only of such doctrines as the indestructibility of matter, the continuity of motion, the persistence of force, the transformation and equivalence of forces, and the universality of law, but, also, of the whole system of theories included in the one word Evolution, has, for its motive, a feeling that is essentially, though imperfectly, religious, *i.e.*, the feeling of *owingness*. The essentially irreligious man is he who has never had it —if such there be—or in whom it has either died altogether, or, at least, has ceased to govern.

6. Science as Knowledge, Comprehension, and Belief.

We shall have to consider further the nature of religion ; but our present subject is the nature of science. For one thing, among many, we are largely indebted to Mr. Spencer. He has done more than any living man to put an end to the theory that what cannot be comprehended is thereby excluded from the sphere of science. After reducing our scientific ideas to those of space, time, matter, motion, force,

consciousness, self, he shows that these stand for realities that cannot be comprehended. Speaking of the man of science he says:—"He realizes with special vividness the utter incomprehensibleness of the simplest fact considered in itself" (p. 67). Of the fundamental ideas to which others may be reduced he says:—"Supposing him in every case able to resolve the appearances, properties, and movements of things into manifestations of force in space and time, he still finds that force, space, and time pass all understanding. Similarly, though the analysis of mental actions may finally bring him down to sensations, as the original materials out of which all thought is woven, yet he is little forwarder; for he can give no account either of sensations themselves or of that something which is conscious of sensations. . . . Ultimate scientific ideas, then, are all representatives of realities that cannot be comprehended" (p. 66). It follows that difficulty, or even impossibility, of comprehension, and, therefore, of complete definition, is no reason for excluding the incomprehensible from the sphere of science. (*First Principles*, 4*th ed.*)

I do not forget that Mr. Spencer, to whom I have appealed, speaks of these relative realities, and of the absolute reality of which they are manifestations, as unknowable. But what if it turns out that by the word "Unknowable" Mr. Spencer simply means the "Incomprehensible"? That this *is* Mr. Spencer's meaning there is abundant proof. Indeed, his "First

Principles" would be unintelligible on any other supposition. We have already seen that if we *know* only what we *comprehend*, we must exclude space and time, matter, motion and force, consciousness and self from the sphere of knowledge. With respect to the man of science Mr. Spencer says: "He, more than any other, truly knows that, in its ultimate essence, nothing can be known" (p. 67). It is evident that if nothing at all could be known, science would have no existence; there would be no man of science. The meaning clearly is, we do not know completely, that is, we do not comprehend. Once more: "So that the personality of which each is conscious, and of which the existence is to each a fact beyond all others most certain, is yet a thing which cannot be truly known at all; knowledge of it is forbidden by the very nature of thought." Here we have something of which each is *conscious*, and yet something which cannot be truly *known at all*. Plainly the statement is meaningless, unless "known" is understood as "comprehended." It would, then, be unscientific to adduce the fact that we do not know completely as a ground for saying we do not know it at all.

It is, I suppose, unnecessary to say that as incomprehensibility does not exclude knowledge, still less does it exclude belief. A very slight acquaintance with the subject would suffice to shew that not only are beliefs necessary to, but, also, that they form a very large part of science; and that if we exclude from the sphere of belief whatever is not *comprehensible*

(however *apprehensible* it may be), we shall, in fact, believe nothing at all.

7. Credibility and Comprehensibility.

Yet as one meets everywhere the statement, "I will not believe what I cannot comprehend," it is reasonable to suppose that, however faulty the expression, it stands for some justifiable meaning. That meaning I take to be, "I cannot believe any statement which is unintelligible," an obviously true, but totally different proposition. Certainly one ought not to believe, or, more correctly, one cannot believe, though he may believe that he believes, a statement which conveys no meaning to his mind. It does not, of course, follow that the statement is untrue. If I happened to remark to a labourer, "In mathematics —the science of quantitative relations—we have an example of abstract science," the sentence would probably convey no meaning to him, but it would be nevertheless true. But if I asked him whether he believed the statement, he would be quite justified in replying, "I neither believe nor disbelieve, for I don't know what you mean." Unintelligibility, then, is a reason for non-belief, not for disbelief.

It seems probable that unintelligibility of statement has been popularly confused with incomprehensibility of thing. The first, as we have seen, is adequate ground for withholding assent; the second is not. Every intelligible proposition in science—be that proposition what it may—involves belief in in-

comprehensible objects of thought. If I say, "space, time, matter, motion, force, consciousness, self, exist," I presume everyone will admit that the statement is intelligible, and believe that it is true. Nevertheless, as we have already seen, not one of these objects of thought is comprehensible. It follows that if the incomprehensibility of the things about which the statements are made be a sufficient ground for withholding assent to the assertion, "they exist," I ought not to believe that there is space or time, matter, motion or force, consciousness or self. But the ideas of these are the elements of science; I ought not, therefore, to believe that there is any science. Thus, adhesion to the statement, "I will not believe in the existence of anything that is incomprehensible," involves the abolition of science. The statement, therefore, is, to its utmost depths, unscientific.

8. Verification and Experience.

What is really meant may be that no statement is trustworthy that is beyond "verification" by the senses. Valuing highly the researches of physical science, and justly delighted with the kind of certainty which follows in the path of patient experiment, many have come to regard with doubt everything that is, or is supposed to be, outside the range of their favourite tests. I will not discuss the large question of the sources of knowledge, or try to settle how much is contributed by the mind itself. But to say all our knowledge comes from "experi-

ence" certainly does not mean that it all comes through the senses, unless it be granted that we have senses for the "spiritual" as well as the "material"; or, if the words are better liked, for the mental as well as the physical. Strictly speaking, there is no such thing as "material" or "physical" science—as regards its nature. It is not "matter," but "mind" that knows; therefore all knowledge is mental; the science of "matter" is not "material" science; the science of "physics" is not "physical" science. But, for convenience sake, the phrases may be allowed to stand, provided we mean by physical science that department of knowledge which has reference to the laws and forces of matter; by mental science that which has reference to the powers and principles of the mind. Only, let it be remembered that knowledge itself is always spiritual or mental, never material or physical. Even if mind or spirit were defined as in some sense material, or ætherial, it would still be so unlike all other kinds of matter as to need a separate name. And the inward "experience" of that spirit or mind would equally have to be taken into account. For if we are faithful to the principle of "the truth, the whole truth," as well as "nothing but the truth," we cannot ignore any experience of the mind, whatever be the subject to which that experience relates.

It is then undoubtedly desirable to "verify" by "sensible" experiment whatever can be so verified. But to restrict science to the sphere of the "sensible," unless the "sensible" include the "spiritual," would

be in effect to say there shall be no science at all. The principles on which it reposes are not "sensible" in the "physical" phenomena with which it deals. The visible universe does not present, as sensible, the laws of logic or of mathematics with which the logician or mathematician is concerned. The laws of molar and molecular mechanics—the sphere of the physicist and the chemist—are not "sensible phemomena." The laws of the redistribution of matter and motion actually going on, whether given in astronomy in general or in the history of the earth in particular, are not objects of the senses. Biological laws are not visibly written on the faces of animals or on the leaves of plants. The principles of classification are not handed in by the things classified. The theory of gravitation is not to be "seen or heard;" nor that of the luminiferous æther; nor that of the conservation of energy, the "transmutability and equivalence of forces;" nor that of "ultimate atoms;" nor that of "primæval mist;" nor, indeed, any other theory whatever.

LECTURE IV.

CERTAINTY AS SCIENTIFIC (b).

1. Introduction.

You will remember the course pursued in the last lecture, which was really the beginning of an attempt to uncover those ultimate ideas of which science is composed, and to set forth the incomprehensible realities for which those ideas stand. The point we reached was the conclusion that science includes many things which go far beyond sensible experience.

2. Inference and Experience.

It may be said, however, that all these are legitimate inferences from sensible phenomena. But the statement is not true unless the "sensible" includes the "spiritual." The phenomena of mind as imperatively demand recognition as those of matter. If all thought be woven from "sensations," the word must include the "sensation" of self—the consciousness of self must include the phenomena of what is called spirit. If the theories be legitimate inferences from "sensible" phenomena, including those of the mind which has the sensations, whence are derived

the laws of inference, the laws without which the inferences would not be legitimate? Clearly from the mind's consciousness of its own operations. Science, therefore, cannot be confined to sensible phenomena and inferences therefrom, unless within its sphere are included, among the phenomena of which we are sensible, among the inferences which are legitimately drawn, those of the mind relating to itself.

In other words, while "experimental" science, or the science of the phenomena and laws of "experience," is itself always "spiritual," it has two well-marked sides, that which relates to the external world, and that which relates to the mind's knowledge of itself. And this distinction, as has been already pointed out, would not be in the least invalidated were we to conclude that matter is a kind of spirit, or spirit a kind of matter. The kinds are so different as to demand distinct names. In any case, it is even more unscientific to ignore or neglect the phenomena and laws of what is called spirit, than it is to ignore or neglect the phenomena and laws of what is called matter. For our science of the latter depends for its validity upon our science of the former. To prove anything, therefore, on the "experimental" ground, against any given propositions, the argument, in order to be scientific, must show that these propositions are contrary to "experience" in the sense described. It follows, of course, equally, that it is scientific to demand "verifi-

cation," so long as experience is rightly interpreted, and that it is unscientific to neglect that verification which consists in congruity with established verities derived from the mind's knowledge of its own operations.

3. The Sensible and the Non-Sensible.

If you hold that all the relations and laws with which science deals are relations and laws of things as well as of thoughts, so much the better. In that case the universe, in every molecule of it, since relation and law are everywhere, is the manifestation in the sensible of that which is not sensible. And then the parallelism between physical and spiritual phenomena may be gladly admitted. For then that of which I am conscious is not the "material" alone, but also the "spiritual" which the material shadows forth. But, in that case, also, must the mind be considered as one of the "things"—though a spiritual thing—whose relations and laws must be taken into account. And as the "material" is apparently incapable of interpreting either the "spiritual" or itself, and the spiritual, on the contrary, can do both, it would seem that the "material" ought rather to be interpreted in terms of the "spiritual" than the reverse. But as all relations and laws are, whether relating to mind or matter, themselves spiritual, we need not discuss that question. Neither need we try the apparently impossible task of defining mind or matter. All I ask is the admission which every one

practically makes, that the something called mind is different from the something called matter, or else that these stand for antithetical phenomena of one and the same substance, of which matter is a no more fitting name than spirit.

4. Characteristics of Scientific Knowledge.

You will grant that science includes belief as well as knowledge, and, therefore, nothing more need be said upon that point. You will grant, also, that scientific knowledge and belief differ from common knowledge and belief in two ways. (*a*) *Knowledge.* 1. It may be said that we cannot know what is not true. In a sense that may be admitted. Still, in another sense, knowledge may be inaccurate; that is to say, we know something, but have misnamed the thing we know. Scientific knowledge differs from common knowledge in its greater accuracy. 2. It also differs in that it is by comparison classified knowledge. I say, by comparison, for, in fact, there can be no definite knowledge without some classification or some equivalent process. Distinguishing between two things is really pulling them apart in thought, and, were it not unusual to use the word of *one* object, we might say each was a class of its own. That difficulty vanishes the moment we add another to either; we have then a class, and we may go on increasing it at our leisure so long as we find like objects. But

in science classification is much more thoroughly and philosophically carried out.

5. Characteristics of Scientific Belief.

(*b*) *Belief.* 1. Scientific belief differs from common belief in the same way as scientific knowledge differs from common knowledge. Belief may be inaccurate as well as knowledge; nay, more, it is said we cannot know what does not exist at all; but we may believe, and many do believe, what has no existence. I am not sure that this is quite accurate; but to discuss the point would take up too much time. It is, at least, certain that beliefs may be inaccurate; that is, may not exactly correspond with, may exceed or fall short of, or otherwise differ from, their objects. Science has its way of testing beliefs; and scientific beliefs differ from common beliefs in that they are either of much greater accuracy, or that their accuracy is more clearly shown. 2. Scientific beliefs, like scientific knowledge, are classified. I need only remind you that, while tested and classified knowledge and belief constitute a particular science, the classification of the sciences themselves is the work of philosophy, which also furnishes to each science the principles on which classification proceeds.

6. An Analysis of Consciousness.

Professor Huxley remarks: "Whoso has mastered the elements of philosophy knows that the attribute of unquestionable certainty appertains only to the

existence of a state of consciousness so long as it exists; all other beliefs are mere probabilities of a higher or lower order." [1] But examination will show that this one certainty has relation to several distinct ideas; and it may be well to give here a statement of these, and also of the principle on which our one feeling of certainty seems to repose. (*a*) *Consciousness of effects* (on self): 1. Relation, likeness, difference; 2. Quality, quantity, number; 3. Being, space, time; 4. Spirit, action, power; 5. Matter, motion, force; 6. Beauty, truth, right. (*b*) *Implication of cause*: *the Omnipresent Power*, (*c*) *Principle of certainty*: the *inconceivability of the negative as true*. Of course, before this principle can be applied the propositions examined must be reduced to their elements. But that the principle itself is virtually admitted by all thinkers seems unquestionable. And it is, perhaps, well to note that the question concerning the propositions resulting from analysis is not whether they are conceivable, but whether their negatives are. Thus, I do not ask, Is the existence of space or time conceivable? but, Is the non-existence of space or time conceivable? Again, I do not ask Is it conceivable that historic events are caused? but, Is it conceivable that historic events are *not* caused? Once more. To assign an inadequate cause is, so far forth, to violate the principle. For, in so far as the cause is not adequate, it is not cause.

[1] *Science and Culture*, p. 264.

7. A Reduction to Absurdity.

Perhaps I cannot better enforce the principle than by asking you to believe, if you can, the following propositions. If not, you admit the principle shortly called the Inconceivability of the Negative.

(*a*) There is no consciousness, no effects, no self.

(*b*) There is no relation, no likeness, no difference.

(*c*) There is no quality, no quantity, no number.

(*d*) There is no being, no space, no time.

(*e*) There is no something called spirit, no action, no power.

(*f*) There is no something called matter, no motion, no force.

(*g*) There is no beauty, no truth, no right.

(*h*) There is no cause, no Omnipresent Power, no Being called God.

The inconceivability of the negative must not, however, be regarded as the spring or origin. The feeling of certainty is rather the accompaniment of our consciousness that *these are* than the conviction that no one can conceive as true the proposition *these are not.* The principle stated is a test rather than a source, and is extremely useful when it is necessary to analyse complex statements in order to discover any error that may have crept in.

8. Summary.

We have no doubt, then, that there exist

1. *Consciousness ;*
2. Consciousness of effects ;
3. Consciousness of effects on self ;
4. *Relations ;*
5. Likeness ;
6. Difference ;
7. *As to quality ;*
8. Quantity ;
9. Number;
10. *Considered as characteristic of existent beings and activities ;*
11. In Space ;
12. In Time ;
13. *Whether what is called Spirit ;*
14. Action ;
15. Power ;
16. *Or what is called Matter ;*
17. Motion ;
18. Force ;
19. *All manifesting laws of Truth ;*
20. Right ;
21. Beauty;
22. *And implying as cause ;*
23. An Omnipresent Power ;
24. *And as test ;*
25. The " Inconceivability of the Negative."

Unless I am prepared to say there is no consciousness, no effect, no self; no relation, no likeness, no difference; no being, no space, no time; no something called matter, no motion, no force; no something called spirit, no action, no power; no beauty, no truth, no right; no cause, no omnipresent power, no test of certainty; I must acknowledge consciousness, as described above, to be scientifically certain, and hold, as a postulate indispensable to science, the existence of a Universal Cause called the Omnipresent Power.

LECTURE V.

CERTAINTY AS RELIGIOUS (a).

1. Introduction.

In a course of thought, as in climbing, it is sometimes well to pause and look back. We have seen that, while the one ultimate certainty is what has been called a state of consciousness while that state exists, yet this certainty spreads out into several propositions which, when tested by the principle described in our last lecture, we cannot but believe. We have also seen that the ideas thus tested are common both to religion and science. The last lecture was devoted to the nature of certainty in relation to science; the present is concerned with the nature of certainty in relation to religion.

2. Two Uses of the Word Certainty.

The phrase—State of Consciousness—is not a very easy one to understand, and I will try to use instead some terms more easily grasped. One must try to distinguish two uses of the word "certainty." It is sometimes used as the expression of a fact, and some-

times as the expression of a feeling. Or, to put it in more general terms, we must distinguish between consciousness and its object. Everyone will grant, for example, that the existence of anything we see does not depend upon our seeing it. Not to limit the statement to objects of sense, let us say whatever exists exists, whether we are conscious of its existence or not—a proposition which none will deny. This is what is sometimes called objective certainty. In order, however, to *feel sure* of the existence of anything we must be directly conscious either of the thing itself, in which case we have what is called immediate knowledge, or of such evidence as warrants the inference or the belief that it exists, in which case we have that secondary knowledge which constitutes the bulk of science. This is what is often called subjective certainty.

3. The Law of Subjective Certainty.

This, I think, may be stated as follows:—The feeling of certainty varies. 1. As the object itself is more or less clearly present to the mind. 2. As its evidence is perceived to be more or less valid when tried by appropriate tests. Let it be supposed, for the sake of argument, that a man is, at any given time, immediately conscious of God. Then so long as that state of consciousness persists it is impossible for the man to doubt that God is. Now let us suppose that this state of consciousness is succeeded by

another of such a nature as to exclude, for the time being, all thought or feeling of God. Would it be right to say that the man had become uncertain of the Divine existence? In one sense, an affirmative answer would be altogether wrong. For so long as the question whether God is is not at all before his mind, we cannot use the words "certainty" or "uncertainty" with any fitness. But suppose the question put to the man himself, and, with its very utterance, there comes back to him what may be called the recurrent consciousness of God; then while this consciousness lasts, it is impossible, as before, to doubt that God is. Should it happen, however, that this consciousness ceased to be recurrent, that though the man should interrogate himself ever so earnestly and ever so honestly, he should fail to find in himself any consciousness whatever of the Divine Presence, then, as one can easily see, it is possible that, interpreting his past by his present, he may come to doubt, or even to deny, that he ever had any consciousness of God at all. From this point of view Atheism can be easily understood as the certainty that one is not certain that God is. Yet, even here, as I hope to show, there is a mistake in the Atheist's interpretation of himself. I may be permitted to add in passing that the Theist will find the greatest safeguard of his Theism in cultivating, until it becomes habitual, the recurrent consciousness of God.

4. Subjective Certainty Touching Evidence.

But there are many to whom the question of Theism does not appear to be one of direct consciousness at all. They think that not only with relation to the historical Christ, but also with respect to the Omnipresent Deity, the whole question is one of reasoned-out belief, in harmony with the laws of evidence as stated in our third lecture. For my own part, I hold not only that it is possible to have, but also that men actually have, immediate consciousness of God in Christ, though they may be unable to put that consciousness into distinct terms. I will not, however, detain you with any considerations on that point. I pass on to the consideration of the feeling of certainty touching evidence.

Here, again, the feeling of certainty depends upon what I have ventured to call recurrent consciousness. Let us suppose that the evidence for any belief or conclusion is right in quality, and adequate in quantity; then, so long as the consciousness of this evidence persists, so long must that belief or conclusion be maintained. In this sense, and, I think, in this sense only, the *freethinker's* contention that belief depends upon evidence is justified. But it is extremely important to note the words "so long as the consciousness of this evidence persists." It must never be forgotten that unless the consciousness recur with sufficient frequency to become habitual, or almost

automatic, in its action, there is always danger of certainty being "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought." In many cases this assurance is rather the remembrance of past certainty than the present consciousness of the sufficiency of the evidence. This is rather a low form of confidence, yet it is one that may be justifiable enough. If, for example, one is no longer capable, owing to failing health or other causes, of appreciating the evidence aright, the recollection of the feeling of certainty the evidence produced when he *was* capable is a not unreasonable ground of confidence. At the same time, it is in every way better to become so familiarized with, at least, the vital elements of the evidence that whenever the negative side recurs the positive shall recur with it. In any case the permanent condition of reasonable certainty is consciousness of the evidence as right in kind and sufficient in amount. I say of "reasonable certainty" to distinguish it, on the one hand, from that feeling of sureness, the source of which is deeper than reason itself, and, on the other, from that confidence which arises from ignorance, or partial knowledge.

5. Causes of Uncertainty.

We are now in a position to understand, at least in part, the causes of the feeling of uncertainty. It is unnecessary to deal with that class of cases in which the evidence, having been fairly tested, has been found insufficient to compel conviction

either for or against. It is enough to note that in all such instances much must depend on the already established beliefs of the inquirer. Thus we see, at once, if we are discussing the question whether the Bible is from God, the enormous logical and moral difference it must make, whether one already believes or does not believe in the existence of a God from whom the Bible could come. What I am concerned with at present, however, is the class of cases where, though the evidence is in itself sufficient to compel conviction, yet conviction is not compelled. Here, though as regards their sources the causes are many, as regards their character the causes are one. The reason why men are uncertain concerning God and Christ is not their consciousness that the evidence is insufficient, but their want of consciousness that it is sufficient. Of course, were the evidence insufficient, that insufficiency would justify suspended judgment. That is to say, the uncertainty of conviction would be produced by the uncertainty of the evidence. In the cases before us the uncertainty is produced not by the evidence, but by ignorance of the evidence. Perhaps ignorance is not quite the best word to use; what I mean is rather that the evidence is not at all, or, at least, not adequately, before the mind. It is either not in the field of vision, or it is not in the right place in that field; either not seen at all or not properly focussed. We may exclude all cases of real inability, whether from defect of faculty or from limitation by circumstances. We

may exclude also, though for a different reason, those whose uncertainty is the direct or indirect result of indifference, and all those who find in the supposed uncertainty of the evidence some excuse for their own selfish indolence or other form of vice. There yet remain vast numbers who are in a state of perplexity sometimes bordering on distraction, produced by the interminable discussions of men whose ability and character no one calls in question. The feeling of helplessness is widespread, even amongst those who are most reluctant to abandon the ancient faith. They have never yet realised in what sense, or to what extent, the Church may prove to be a practically infallible guide, and being compelled, as they imagine, by the force of absolutely honest criticism, to give up, at all events in its traditional form, the infallibility of the Bible, they simply do not know what to believe or what to disbelieve. Their only certainty appears to be that very little is certain. Out of this great good may yet emerge. Men will surely come to see that the Spirit which inspired prophet and apostle is still present in the world, and whoso trusts Him will sooner or later be guided into all the truth he needs ; truth touching his thought as creed, touching his conscience as law, touching his heart as love. The condition of certainty now, as when Christ spoke, is that men should will to do the will of God—that is of the absolute Good. All such men, however perplexed and troubled for a time, may yet, in the midst of it all, repose with unfaltering con-

fidence on the fact that they are being led by the Spirit of God—and I do not hesitate to add that all they who are dominantly sincere seekers for truth and right, and who will to live the truth and right they learn, are indeed being led by the same Spirit, however unconscious of the fact they themselves may be. And I must also add that for certainty touching the vital truths of the Catholic faith, scholarship, in its technical sense, is not in the least necessary. Those truths may be received by all men of goodwill. The souls, like the eyes, of the infant and of the philosopher, live in and by the same light. And so far as the need for definite judgment arises, so far the ordinary seeker, if governed by the will to do and be the truth and right as they come, is abundantly able to make up his mind as to the essential doctrines of the Christian faith.

6. The Basal Certainty of Theism.

Let us come now to the consideration of certain points about which we are agreed. I cannot but believe that when you speak of the power manifested in all phenomena as "unknowable" you really mean incomprehensible. If so, then, as this is not a doctrine peculiar to agnostics, as it is also the doctrine of the Bible and the Church, there is no occasion for its discussion here. Starting from the common ground that this power is *incomprehensible*, we have to learn how far by your own statement it is *apprehensible* and the Object of justified *belief*. For this purpose I take

the words of your greatest and best known representative, Mr. Herbert Spencer.

This Power is an object of consciousness, and is, therefore, to that extent known.[1] "Besides that definite consciousness of which logic formulates the laws, there is an indefinite" (*i.e.*, more than definite) "consciousness which cannot be formulated." This consciousness is of such a nature as to entitle us to say that nothing in all the range of knowledge and belief is so certain as the existence of this Power. "Clearly, then, the very demonstration that definite consciousness of the Absolute is impossible to us, unavoidably supposes an indefinite" (*i.e.*, more than definite) "consciousness of it." "Though the absolute cannot, in any manner or degree, be known in the strict sense of knowing" (*i.e.*, comprehending), "yet we find that its positive existence is a necessary datum of consciousness; that, so long as consciousness continues, we cannot for an instance rid it of this datum; and that thus the belief which this datum constitutes has a higher warrant than any other whatever."

7. Why are there Atheists?

Why, then, it may be asked, have there been any "atheists?" The term, I must answer, has often been misapplied, has been flung carelessly about; sometimes in the reckless anger which simply willed

[1] "First Principles," p. 88. All the quotations are from the fourth edition.

to give pain ; sometimes in the selfish indolence that would not take the trouble to distinguish ; sometimes in the narrow ignorance that was unable to see the injustice of the word ; sometimes from the thoughtless confusion of practical with theoretical atheism. The last-mentioned source of error probably explains why it is that so many still believe that Voltaire and Paine were atheists. Then, a not inconsiderable number have, quite inaccurately, called themselves by this objectionable name, in order to mark, in the strongest way, their dissent from, and opposition to, "popular Christianity." Others have allowed themselves to drift into the same ranks because of some real or imagined ill-treatment, or in utter disgust with unquestionably real "inconsistencies" on the part of "believers." But, besides all this, a man may be conscious of God without realizing that it *is* God of whom he is conscious; may, for example, regard the power manifested in all phenomena as "eternal energy," and, seeing that this is not what Christians mean by "God," may honestly suppose himself an atheist.

8. Is God Knowable?

The question really in dispute is whether to this more than definite consciousness the word knowledge can be properly applied. We are agreed as to the facts. We are agreed that there is definite consciousness to which alone you give the name knowledge. We are agreed that there is a more than definite

consciousness, which appears to me to be also knowledge. Consciousness is common to both, and you might fittingly enough call the first either definite consciousness or definite knowledge; the second either more than definite consciousness or more than definite knowledge. But to those who understand the meaning of the words I have quoted, there can be no stronger or clearer statement of the truth that we are more than definitely conscious of this Power—that belief in its existence is a necessary belief of the human mind; and that we have here the deepest certainty the human mind can feel.

LECTURE VI.

CERTAINTY AS RELIGIOUS (b).

1. Introduction.

We have seen that the existence of God is granted, and that the only remaining question is, In what sense is He knowable? In answering this question let us follow the lines of the Agnostic philosophy itself, with a view of ascertaining how far in this direction Agnostics have already advanced.

2. The Absolute and Omnipresent Power.

I need not dwell upon the Omnipresence of the "Inscrutable Being," for this is included in the phrase "manifested in all phenomena," and the like. Yet, for the sake of formal proof, it may be well to quote the exact words We are obliged to regard every phenomenon as the manifestation of some Power by which we are acted upon; though Omnipresence is unthinkable, yet, as experience discloses no bounds to the diffusion of phenomena, we are unable to think of limits to the presence of this Power; while the criticisms of science teach us that this Power is incomprehensible. And this consciousness of an incom-

prehensible Power, called omnipresent from inability to assign its limits, is just the consciousness on which religion dwells." It might be more correct to conjecture that we are unable to assign limits because there are no limits to be assigned; but Mr. Spencer has probably gone as far as strictly scientific thinking would justify.

3. Strange Misuse of the Word "Unknowable."

Even at this point, however, one cannot but wonder that he should still use so misleading a word as unknowable. For the "Unknowable" Being is described as the "Absolute," as "Power," as "Omnipresent." But if any object of thought can be described it is not unknowable, and, therefore, in this case, the word ought not to be used. If anyone should fail to see this sufficiently obvious truth let him suppose *O* to stand for (1) nothing. What, then, are its attributes? It has none. (2) Something. Does it exist? Yes, otherwise it would be nothing, not something. Do you know that it exists? Yes; it is an object of consciousness, but that is all I know. Then you *do* know that much. Is it absolute? Oh yes, it must be absolute, for otherwise the relative would have no meaning. Ah! that is something more. Is it omnipresent? Well, yes, for I can see no limit. That is another thing. Is it Power? Of course, I insist on that. Here then is another thing which you know. Why, then, call that which

you know to exist, to be absolute, to be omnipresent, to be a Power, unknowable? I mean incomprehensible. But by what right do you say "unknowable" when you mean incomprehensible?

4. The Universal Cause.

To this we must make, in the name of our moral consciousness, a twofold qualification. Under no circumstances can we regard God as the author of sin; the consciousness of freedom within limits is a part of the consciousness that we live. So qualified, we very heartily accept the statement. "We are no more able to form a circumscribed idea of cause than of space or time, and we are consequently obliged to think of the cause which transcends the limit of our thought as positive, though indefinite." This sentence is, from many points of view, worthy of deep study. Here we see what Mr. Spencer means by indefinite—that which fills our thought up to its limit and passes beyond. The Omnipresent Cause is apprehensible, but not comprehensible, a view with which no competent theologian will find fault.

5. The Cause Known in the Effects.

If, then, all the universe is a manifestation of the Omnipresent Cause, in what sense can it be said that God is unknowable? It may be answered that we cannot "know" Him as He is apart from His manifestations. But if we are conscious of Him as the

Absolute, we *do* "know" Him apart from His manifestations. If it be said that He can be known only through His manifestations in consciousness, in the universe, in history, then who seeks to know Him otherwise? And as regards His relation as cause to us, and to all that is, we, at least, know that He is not less than the totality, than the highest, of the effects He produces—not less therefore than His manifestation in Jesus Christ. If He be the Power, the Cause, manifested in all phenomena, He cannot be less than they, not less than their totality, not less than their highest; for otherwise there would be something in the phenomena which He did not produce, something uncaused. We have, indeed, no right to limit His "attributes" to those of Omnipresent Cause, for it is beyond our capacity to think of limits, within the range of the possible, to the Power manifested in what the universe is and is becoming; but it is utterly unscientific to ascribe to Him the "attribute" of Omnipresent Cause, and yet to affirm that, as Cause, He is unknowable. We gladly remember, however, that Mr. Spencer simply means incomprehensible. We may add here that his argument disposes of the unscientific demand for the cause of the Omnipresent Power. For such a question supposes the Omnipresent Power to be an effect, a supposition which amounts to a contradiction in terms. For this would be to make the Power manifest in all phenomena *not* that Power.

6. The Spirituality of the Divine Nature.

The Omnipresent Power is not force as we know it, but an absolute reality which produces it. It is only fair to Mr. Spencer to put his views on so difficult a subject at some length before you. Criticising alike the "spiritual" and the "material" hypotheses of the universe, he says,[1] "Any argument which is apparently furnished to either hypothesis is neutralized by as good an argument furnished to the other. The materialist, seeing it to be a necessary deduction from the law of correlation that what exists under the form of feeling is transformable into an equivalent of mechanical motion, and by consequence into equivalents of all the other forces which matter exhibits, may consider it, therefore, demonstrated that the phenomena of consciousness are material phenomena. But the spiritualist, setting out with the same data, may argue with equal cogency that, if the forces displayed by matter are cognizable only under the shape of those equivalent amounts of consciousness, they are of the same intrinsic nature as when existing in consciousness; and that so is justified the spiritualistic conception of the external world, as consisting of something essentially identical with what we call mind. Manifestly the establishment of correlation and equivalence between the forces of the outer and inner worlds, may be used to assimilate

[1] "First Principles," p. 558.

either to the other; according as we set out with one or other term. But he who rightly interprets the doctrine contained in this work will see that neither of these terms can be taken as ultimate. He will see that though the relation of subject and object renders necessary to us these antithetical conceptions of spirit and matter, the one is no less than the other to be regarded as but a sign of the Unknown" (*i.e.*, incomprehensible) "Reality which underlies both." Again:[1]—"Force, as we know it, can be regarded only as a certain conditioned effect of the unconditioned cause—as the relative reality indicating to us an Absolute Reality by which it is immediately produced." Once more:[2]—"We are compelled to admit that force, as it exists out of our consciousness, is not force as we know it. Hence the force of which we assert persistence is that absolute force of which we are indefinitely conscious as the necessary correlate of the force we know."

Though some of you may not be sufficiently familiar with the controversy to appreciate at their right value all the points in the foregoing quotations, you will see at once that, according to Mr. Spencer, we are not justified in thinking of the Cause of the Universe as material or as force in its ordinary sense; and that even "spiritual" is not an adequate term. He will see also that the ideas of spirit and matter are necessary ideas. If we are guided by our own

[1] "First Principles," p. 176. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 192.

"experience" we shall attribute force to the action of spirit, for it is only by our consciousness of our own spirit's acting on matter, apparently through nerve and muscle, that we have any idea of force at all. In any case, if, as granted, the Divine Power is not force as we know it in the Universe, that Power cannot be less than spiritual.

7. THE OMNIPRESENT POWER MANIFESTED IN ALL PHENOMENA IS NOT LESS THAN PERSONAL.

It will probably surprise a good many to hear this view ascribed to Mr. Spencer (p. 109).

"If there be any meaning in the foregoing arguments, duty requires us neither to affirm nor deny Personality. . . . Those who espouse this alternative position make the erroneous assumption that this choice is between personality and something lower than personality, whereas this choice is rather between personality and something higher. Is it not just possible that there is a mode of being as much transcending Intelligence and Will as these transcend mechanical motions? It is true that we are totally unable to conceive" [? imagine] "any such higher mode of being, but this is not a reason for questioning its existence; it is rather the reverse." One might, not unreasonably, infer that as Mr. Spencer grants that the highest conception we can form is that of a Being possessing intelligence and will; it is our duty to ascribe to the Power manifested in all phenomena consciousness and volition, since these touch

the utmost height of our conceptions. But, at all events, this Being is not less than "personal."

8. Summary.

In any case, whoever will think out the argument will find that we have, by the logic of Agnosticism itself, the following certainties :—

1. Consciousness is.
2. Effects are produced on Consciousness.
3. The ultimate Cause of those effects is a Power.
4. That Power is Omnipresent.
5. The Omnipresent Power is manifest in all phenomena.
6. The Omnipresent Power is the cause of all phenomena.
7. The Omnipresent Power is not force, but its cause.
8. The Omnipresent Power is not matter or motion, space or time, but their cause.
9. The Omnipresent Power is not less than spiritual.
10. The Omnipresent Power is not less than conscious.
11. The Omnipresent Power is not less than volitional.
12. The Omnipresent Power is not less than true right, beautiful.
13. The Omnipresent Power is not less than good.
14. The Omnipresent Power is not less than love.

15. The Omnipresent Power so described is identical with God.

I ought to recognise, both theoretically and practically, the fact that, whatever its special forms, Theism has for its basal certainty the truth that the Power manifested in all phenomena cannot be less than its manifestation, cannot be less than the God of Christ.

LECTURE VII.

CERTAINTY AS CHRISTIAN (*a*).

1. Introduction: The Divine Character.

We have seen how impossible it is, on the Agnostic Philosophy, to fall short of Theism. We may now note certain conclusions involved in the principles laid down by Mr. Spencer, though he has apparently stopped short of those conclusions himself. The idea of God as perfectly good appears to be justified on the principle that God cannot be less than His highest manifestation. It is true that the complete external justification of this idea involves a future life, the area of the present not affording sufficient range for its vindication. But that is not a reason for questioning the perfect goodness; it is "rather the reverse." Is it credible that a Being who was not perfectly good should have, however gradually, produced this idea of Himself in the human mind? It may be granted that in the phenomenal universe alone, or even in any history of man which excluded the life of Christ on earth, and the story of the Jewish and of the Christian Church, we should look in vain for an adequate interpretation of the character of God

as perfectly good. But is the idea, given in human consciousness, met and developed by Divine revelation, completed embodied and lived by Jesus Christ, preserved, proclaimed, and applied by the Christian Church, explicable on any other hypothesis than that it answers to the perfection of the Divine Character?

In so far as Christian theology has erred in this respect, it has erred by defect, not by excess. The errors of individual Christians in their daily lives may, perhaps, be of the same nature. They have prayed for this or that "good," and have been disappointed because they have not received that for which they asked. But when they exchange their narrow outlook for the wider range presented in the recorded experience of the Christian Church, nay, often even within the limits of their own personal history, it is possible they may find reason to conclude that it is not indifference, but *perfect* goodness which has barred the way to their receiving the too contracted "blessings" for which they prayed. And, generally, in the Church at large, and in particular cases, the growing experience of mankind appears to shew that all errors of this kind have the same character—that they arise from defective views of the perfection of God.

As against an idea so produced and so justified, I do not see that difficulties, however grave, can be scientifically maintained. The existence of evil, physical and moral, whether exhibited in the seeming "pitilessness" of nature or the developed selfishness of man, embraces in its tremendous grasp all the

"moral difficulties" alleged against Theism. Many of these have been "explained," more or less satisfactorily, and it is not impossible to show that others owe their being to the defective conceptions of what perfect goodness must involve. And it is conceded —or, rather, maintained—that the complete external vindication of that goodness necessitates a future life. From the practical point of view the supreme interest is not the origin or the explanation, but the extinction of evils. If his house were on fire, the tenant would not calmly sit down in sight of the increasing flames to consider the question of how the fire originated. He would first put the fire out. But whether the explanation of "difficulties" be adequate or not, the difficulties themselves cannot be scientifically upheld as affording sufficient reason for withholding belief in God as perfectly good. No one pretends that explanation, hereafter, is impossible, and so long as that is the case, we may be content to give our present energies to the more profitable task of lessening the evils we find in existence. Even if there be reason to believe, from the limitations of finite knowledge, that some difficulties must always continue, these could not be maintained against a positive principle of the human mind, as a reason for doubting the goodness of God.

2. General Objections to Theism.

A like remark may be made with respect to objections urged against Theism in general. Not one

of these is fatal. It is hardly wise to take seriously the objection that our idea of God is necessarily anthropomorphic, and *therefore* false. For on this showing, all our ideas—the objection included—are false, for all are anthropomorphic. Or, if the objector has an idea of God which is not invested with this supposed unworthy quality, then Theism is *not* necessarily anthropomorphic. A little thought might surely convince anyone that the idea of Power is itself an instance of anthropomorphism, as indeed is that of existence. Our choice is not between its presence and its absence, but between lower and higher forms. The highest possible to us, as Mr. Spencer admits, is that of intelligence and will, to which we must add, perfect goodness.

As to other points:—1. The perfected theory of evolution has not yet been reached; but, in any case, it only affects the methods in which God is pleased to work. To suppose evolution itself to be a force adequate to the production of the Universe, including all the phenomena of human consciousness and history, is simply to find God under another name. 2. To deny or refuse to believe that there is one Power—the absolute Reality—of which the Universe is the manifestation, is to discredit the very basis on which the evolution philosophy rests. 3. To affirm the eternity of matter, motion, force, space, time, were that scientifically justifiable, would involve the eternity also of that Power of which matter, motion, force, space, and time are manifestations. 4. To

attribute everything to law as the producing power is but to assign a synonym for God. For this producing power cannot be less than its highest manifestation—cannot be less than intelligent, conscious, volitional, personal, good. To suppose that the order, adaptation, harmony displayed in phenomena are owing to the Universe itself, that to the same cause are to be attributed the intelligence, consciousness, volition possessed by some of its effects, is but to regard the Universe—the one in many—as itself a Being intelligent, conscious, volitional, capable of producing like qualities in men, and order, adaptation, harmony in its own phenomena in general. They who will not believe in the God of the Universe must logically regard the Universe as God. And this not in the sense of Pantheism, but in that of a conscious, personal Being.

3. Designer and Evolver.

The objections urged against the substance of the design argument are similarly futile. To object that "contrivance" implies weakness, inasmuch as had God but sufficient power He would accomplish His purpose without contrivance, is itself an example of bad anthropomorphism. It is not the business of science to imagine what might or might not have been, but to interpret the facts we have, and these abundantly justify the argument from design. To conclude that, because some theologians have mistaken the character and extent of design, therefore,

there is no design at all, is an amazing specimen of reasoning. The extension which modern science has given to the idea is extremely great; but to argue from this against design itself is equivalent to saying that because everything is designed nothing is designed! To infer that because we have no experience — a statement which is totally contrary to the doctrine of Mr. Spencer that we have an indefinite (*i.e.*, more than definite) consciousness of the Omnipresent power —of any designer who is not himself designed, God must have had a designer also, is no argument for atheism or agnosticism. For were the statement as true as I believe it to be false, He whose design was in the world and in ourselves, beyond Whom there was no consciousness on our part, and no evidence anywhere, would still be the designer of the universe and of man—the God Whom we ought to acknowledge, worship, love, and obey. To imagine that evolution is in any degree contrary to design is mere confusion of thought—evolution affecting only the manner, not the reality, of design. Finally, to conclude that because there are some things the design of which we do not see, therefore there is no design in anything, is to reach the extreme of unreason—the deification of absurdity. The theist may, so far, rest in peace, assured that as against the proposition presented no argument has been made good. He may very reasonably conclude that fatal objections can never be produced, and that such as have any ground appeal only to the form not the substance of theism.

An inquiry into the objections raised but emphazises the truth that it is unscientific not to believe in the Power manifested in all phenomena, as not less than the totality, not less than the highest of its manifestations, not less, therefore, than the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. The Standpoint Reached.

There are, doubtless, some things about which one would continue certain, even if he found that he alone was conscious of them. Suppose all the inhabitants of the world, except one, were blind. Were this one to proclaim the existence of light he would be speaking truly, and when it became evident that none but himself perceived the fact, he, though the blindness of others would be a sorrow to him, could not, so long as that state of consciousness endured, doubt the existence of light. If, instead of all being blind, he found here and there another who saw as he did, that would be a pleasure to him, but his certainty could hardly be increased thereby. If on pursuing his enquiries he found that many men were not really blind, and actually saw what he saw, but called it by another name, if, on further trial, he discovered a great number who, on being persuaded to open their eyes, saw what he saw, I imagine his feeling of pleasure would be further increased, but not his certainty. If, however, he himself wandered into darkness, it is conceivable that the day might come when he should cease to believe that he had ever seen the light, even though multitudes declared they saw it

still. If he had reason to suspect that the multitudes had been dominated by some strong leader who had induced the false belief that they saw what he had once proclaimed visible to himself, their testimony would lose its value. But on finding that all sorts and conditions of men—those who were not so dominated as well as those who were—agreed as to their perception, he would probably begin to think that there perhaps was light after all. Yet the only way to be sure would be to come back into and stay in the light. And the only way to have immovable certainty in Theism is to make perpetual that state of consciousness in which the Divine presence is recognised. It is better to prevent doubts than to answer them, and the answer must be of the same nature as the prevention. The way of prevention or of answer is for the agnostic to be very near to God. He who is this, and while he is, cannot doubt. It is a part of that which Professor Huxley calls the one certainty. In other words, it is the certainty which accompanies experience of God.

The proposition that we ought to believe, trust, love, and obey Jesus Christ is involved in every form of the Christian religion, and may therefore be regarded as standing for what, *in relation to this controversy*, may be called Irreducible Christianity. I do not for a moment pretend that it stands for this in any other sense. I, for the present, neither affirm nor deny that the Christianity of Christ and His Church, as expressed in the Catholic Faith, is authoritative,

being Divinely inspired and free from error in its own sphere. But, supposing Christianity true, there are certain conclusions which must follow. The Christianity of Christ transcends the power of expression on the part of His Church in which dwells for guidance into all truth His Holy Spirit; and the Catholic life, as produced and informed by the Holy Spirit, must be deeper and broader than any symbols, though entirely true, can possibly set forth. This, indeed, must be the case, for if the Christianity of the Church be, as by supposition it is, life in God as manifested in Christ, life in Christ Who is God manifested, and if this life uprise from the indwelling Spirit of God and of Christ, then must the Christianity lived be filled with the Divine *infinite*, and therefore transcend all power of expression. But one would not be justified in denying the name of Christian to any man who was faithful to the Spirit of Christ, however unable he might be, as yet, to realize his implied relation to the Catholic Church and the Catholic Faith. This, then, is the sense in which you ought, without abandoning the principle of agnosticism that God cannot be definitely known, to become Christians, namely, that you should believe, trust, love, obey, and rejoice in, the God of Jesus Christ.

5. The Primary Obligation to Believe.

You are familiar, doubtless, with, at least, the main agreements of scholars as to the truth of the New Testament, but you will bear in mind that I am

not at present directly concerned with that question. In the necessary belief that God is not less than the totality—not less than the highest—of His manifestations we have our deepest foundation, and on that is laid the chief corner stone that Jesus Christ is the highest known manifestation of God. If you deny the foundation you will not, of course, accept the cornerstone. But you cannot deny the foundation without sacrificing the principle that the Omnipresent Power cannot be less than the totality, cannot be less than the highest of its manifestations, cannot be less than righteous love, cannot be less than Jesus Christ. I do not deny that all men are manifestations of God; but I affirm what, so far as I know, has never been seriously questioned, that if there be a God Who loves, and that there must be follows, as we have seen, from your own logic, Jesus Christ is His supreme manifestation. Thus, then, we have reached sub-Christian Theism, and our concern is to learn and remember its immediate interpretations.

It is clear that the first certain obligation of the Agnostic is, by his own logic, to transcend, if he can —at least, to reach—in belief and conduct, so far as conduct depends on belief, the highest known Theism. As we have seen, God is not less than spiritual, conscious, and personal. He is not less than the noblest and loftiest conception we can form. In Him meet whatever love, reverence, trust, adoration, awe, joy, hope, worship need as their object. We must regard Him as not less than eternal will, absolute

reason, omnipresent power, of which ourselves and the universe are manifestations. To say that He transcends our greatest conception of Him is to admit our obligation to adjust our thoughts, feelings, and actions, to our continually ascending ideal of God. In this, the logic of the Agnostic and the philosophy of the Theist are one. But to regard God as the Unknowable, unless this be constantly interpreted as the more than Knowable, it is to present to the mind, not God as the Omnipresent Power, including and transcending every perfection the Theist attributes to Him, but an absolute blank! The next certainty is, as we have seen, that Jesus Christ is, within the moral sphere, not only a high, but the highest manifestation of God. It is quite true this does not directly involve the obligation to accept everything the New Testament contains, still less everything in the Old Testament. But it does involve belief, and obligation to act in harmony with the belief, in the actual teaching of Christ as the highest manifestation of God.

6. Regret for Unbelief.

Let me again remind you that what one owes, if he owes anything, to God or Christ he still owes whatever his belief may be. Unbelief cannot annul duty. Of course, real incapacity, wherever it exists, must be taken into account. But a man eager for improvement does not, in his own case, care to differentiate too nicely between evil as disease and evil as sin.

He will not content himself with saying, "There are limits to the extent to which I am to be blamed for what I am and do." Whether past wrong conduct has resulted from causes he could or could not control, he will deplore the wrongness as soon as he discovers it. In forming a moral judgment on the conduct of others he will emphasize the distinction which for himself he practically neglects. The guilt of doing wrong is always proportionate to the power of doing right, or, at least, to the power of refraining from doing wrong. Nevertheless the absence of power, though it be absence of guilt, is not absence of duty. An awakened citizen will feel that his relation to the State involved duties which, until his awakening, had not been performed, even though he may be excused on the ground that beforehand he had no conception of those duties. Actions are suitable or unsuitable, independently of our knowledge or ignorance of the fact. Consciousness does not create, nor unconsciousness destroy, the fitness or unfitness of conduct. From this point of view the way a man ought to take is mapped out for him before he is born. Obedience to those manifestations of the Omnipresent Power which are called physical laws is plainly fitting, and, in this sense, ought to be rendered. If there be made known to us other manifestations of the Omnipresent Power called spiritual laws, obedience is no less fitting or due. Clearly this fitness or dueness does not, in the nature of the case, depend upon whether we believe in the existence of

these laws or not. Unbelief in honesty does not abrogate the law, Thou shalt not steal. Unbelief in God does not abolish the law, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart. The man who comes to see this will be sorry that he had not beforetime loved God. This sorrow is really a part of repentance, because he sorrows not only that he was to blame, but that he was wrong, whether to blame or not, and he now wills to be right. So far forth this turning — the essence of repentance — is coming to Christ, which means taking His yoke. That yoke is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself.

It is manifestly fitting to believe what is true. That, no one, I suppose, will deny. In this sense the duty to believe precedes and goes beyond belief. The fitness or dueness is always there and exceeds, in every direction, our attainment. It is no less true that the power of believing, and of believing rightly, is always the standard by which the guilt of not believing, or of believing wrongly, is measured. Though the guilt always varies as the power, the dueness or fitness varies only as the truth. An awakened man, therefore, however, gentle in his judgment of others, will always feel sorry he has not believed sooner. He will regret all the past in which he did not, by belief, respond to the truth. He will not too curiously try to discover for how much of this he deserves blame. What he wills now is to be in harmony with truth, and that this harmony should

continually become more perfect. This is really repentance — turning to the truth — from another point of view.

7. Sub-Christian Theists and the Church.

There are, however, some Agnostics who are sub-Christians in the sense described. They are able, they think, to accept the Christianity of Christ, as set forth by himself; but they are not able to accept the Church of Christ, either as to its whole belief expressed in creeds, or as to some of its principles exhibited in conduct. I cannot think this inability is a sufficient reason for calling themselves Agnostics, for it does not rightly set forth their real attitude towards God in Christ. Yet the name is often assumed for reasons the very opposite of what many Christians imagine—not, certainly, from arrogant contempt for others, but solely from unwillingness to take any name that would imply either assent to Christianity in history, or dissent from Christianity in essence. Agnosticism seems to them—very unfortunately, I think—the best word they can find to express this attitude.

One is often asked to point out the body or party of Christians who would accept into their fellowship men who could go no further in the direction of doctrine than the standard set forth in the preceding pages. That standard recognises as sub-Christians men who cannot call themselves either Trinitarians or Unitarians, who love and obey Jesus Christ with-

out being able to come to any conclusion about the Incarnation, or the sense in which He is divine. It is, I think, quite possible that many bodies would recognise as members Christians of this type. But as regards the Church of England the question would have to be put in a different shape, at least in the case of the majority of Agnostics. Her assumption is that Englishmen are already in her fellowship, and the question is, would the inability of her members to go further than this standard constitute, morally or legally, a sufficient reason for cutting them off from her fellowship? It is an eminently practical question, and can be solved practically only. It is true that baptism assumes belief in the Holy Trinity; it is true that the same belief is implied in the Apostles' Creed; but as it is infants who are baptized, this belief is not consciously theirs, but that into which the Church expects them to grow up. The membership of the infant in the "body of Christ" does not therefore depend upon the creeds. The question, then, assumes this shape. Would the Church pronounce against any member who fails to grow up into, or falls back from, this belief in the Holy Trinity? If this were non-belief only—undeveloped faith—I am sure she would not; if it amounted to positive and deliberate disbelief, I suppose she would and I think she ought. And yet, as we have seen, neither Trinitarianism nor Unitarianism is elementarily necessary. But those who disbelieve have passed out of the elementary stage, and definitely

declared against the Christian Faith. I do not deny that a Unitarian may have a large amount of Christianity, as I am sure many Agnostics have; yet, as they formally deny the Catholic Faith, they, so far forth, cut themselves off from the Catholic Church. But that is no reason for refraining from loving regard and such frank fellowship as may be possible, and it is very much, on the ground of what remains common to both.

On the one hand, I am sure that none of her children who are Christians in the sense described ought to be cast out simply because of logical failure to rightly develop their Christian conceptions. On the other hand, the agnostic Christian ought not to expect that the Church will depart from the standard of the faith once for all delivered. But then this is not the condition of membership; it is the standard of perfect doctrine. The Church is not only entitled, but under obligation, to develop Christianity to the utmost along the lines of thought, feeling, volition, action. The first of these appears to have been accomplished in the Creeds to a degree of fulness scarcely secured in other respects. The only ground on which such development can be rightly assailed is that the conclusions reached are not true, so long as these conclusions are not made the conditions of fellowship; if they are, they may be reasonably assailed on the further ground that to do this is to make, not Christianity, but logic the test of membership. But let every Catholic Christian recognise to

the utmost of his power his agnostic brother; let every agnostic Christian co-operate to the utmost of his power with his Catholic brother, for though the one is a developed Christian and the other is not, they are brethren in Christ. At the same time it is well worth while to consider whether the Catholic Faith itself is rightly regarded by the agnostic Christian, and whether many of the difficulties he feels relate to the Catholic Faith at all. But this is a point which cannot be further pursued at present without passing beyond the limits of my subject.

8. Summary.

Co-ordinating the preceding ideas with my feeling of obligation, I see no escape from the following conclusions, and I cannot but think that all those who do not so interpret the "mechanical" theory of the Universe as to exclude the idea of duty altogether will agree with me herein :—

1. I ought to recognise God as the cause of consciousness, self, not-self; a consciousness which involves the ideas of relation, likeness, difference; truth, right, beauty; quality, quantity, number; being, space, time; spirit, action, power; matter, motion, force.

2. I ought (1) to recognise God as the cause of all modes of being, and of all the relations in which they exist; and, therefore, of those relations the classification of which as true constitutes science as rational; the classification of which as right constitutes science

as moral ; the classification of which as beautiful constitutes science as æsthetic.

3. I ought (2) to recognise God as the cause of those relations the classification of which constitutes science under the above threefold aspect, relations existing among all modes of being, permeating the atom as the Universe, the Universe as the atom, constituting the threefold unity with which the human mind, as reason, conscience, and faculty of beauty, is concerned. These relations are abstractly those of quality (logic) ; those of quantity (including number, mathematics) ; abstract—concretely, those of force, in masses (molar mechanics) ; in molecules (molecular mechanics) ; concretely, those of the redistribution of matter and motion among the celestial bodies (astronomy) ; in the earth (geology in the larger sense) ; those of life (biology) ; those of mind on its spiritual and physical sides (pscychology) ; those of society on its spiritual and physical sides (sociology) ; those of conduct on its spiritual and physical sides (ethology).

4. I ought (3) to recognise God as the cause of all science, and all science as spiritual ; as relating to mind, mental ; as relating to force, physical. It is a question to which the answer is scarcely yet possible whether mind and matter are co-extensive ; that is to say, whether there is not rudimentary life and intelligence even in atoms. Should the answer be yes, then will science be spiritual not only as now in its own nature, but as having for its object mental as well as physical phenomena everywhere. Thus astro-

nomy and geology, for example, would be at the same time mental and physical. I use the word physical rather than material, because it is by no means clear, according to Mr. Spencer, that matter is anything in itself, other than a manifestation of force. Be all this as it may, it is certain that there are, whether co-extensive or not, two co-existing ranges, the mental and the physical, and that the first interprets both itself and the second, though the two be in essence one.

5. I ought to recognise God as the Omnipresent Cause of the universe in its relations of truth, right, and beauty. It is probable that science will one day recognise the entire universe as moral, that, in short, everything, not endowed with will, is as it ought to be. But, at least, we may see that truth, right, and beauty are three in one, and are, like all else, caused by God. We must, therefore, endeavour to free ourselves from the evil influence of the word "secular" and the like, as if there were no sacredness in science. On the contrary, everything is sacred, because everything is, in one way or another, a true, righteous, and beautiful manifestation of God.

6. I ought to recognise the fact that we know God as far as we know His manifestations. (I am not prepared to deny that we have a direct and more than definite — therefore inexpressible — consciousness of Him. But I do not go into that now.) If, as we have seen, God is the cause of the effects we have classified, then we certainly know *Him* so far as we

know *them.* They are quite right who say knowledge of effects gives us no title to affirm that we know God in any other sense. But that is not what I affirm. It is that we know God as Cause.

7. I ought, then, to conclude that God, as their Cause, is not less than force, motion, matter, power, action, spirit, number, quantity, quality, beauty, right, truth, difference, likeness, relation, not-self, self, consciousness. But it is impossible to examine consciousness without finding therein intelligence, love, and will. The cause of consciousness is therefore not less than intelligence, love, and will.

8. I ought to hold, as a necessary inference from what has been already admitted, that, outside of the sphere of voluntary action, and despite all "appearances" to the contrary, whatever is, is right.

9. I ought to hold that, within the sphere of voluntary action, it is our duty to adjust thought, feeling, volition to truth, right, and beauty. This adjustment implies recognition of, and obedience to, the highest knowledge of God wherever obtained, *i.e.*, whether "discovered" or "revealed."

10. I ought to hold the sphere of "natural" religion and the sphere of "natural" science to be one and the same, but from two points of view. Each is not only co-extensive, but also identical with the other. The difference in point of view is this: Science contemplates the universe as the *manifestation* of God; religion contemplates the universe as the manifestation of *God.* In the latter aspect the wonder

awe, reverence, love, trust, gladness, the feeling of dependence, the feeling of the infinite, though occasioned by the manifestation, have for their object the Being manifested. We ought to control our consciousness until this response to the Divine becomes habitual.

11. Accepting evolution as a fact, I ought to regard the universe as not only become, but as becoming, and control my feeling in accordance with this truth. Touching a future so immense as to be unimaginable, we have thus the basis of a sure and certain hope. That what is to be will transcend all that has been, and all that is, is manifestly implied in the theory itself. But this ought to be kept before the mind until it becomes habitually present in consciousness, and intensifies the trust and joy with which we regard God.

12. As there is no accounting for Christ, except as, within the sphere of religion, the highest manifestation of the Divine, I ought to accept His interpretation of God with even more assured certainty than I accept the scientific interpretation of the manifestation of God in the universe. There is absolutely no conflict between the two. Science is either harmonious or silent as to the points on which He speaks. The love of God for the individual, the Divine pity for suffering, the means of overcoming the power of sin, and of receiving eternal life, are His special subjects. It cannot be denied that His teaching is worthy of God, and one's nature recognises its truth

with a certainty that is more than that of reason. With it the conception of God transcends the utmost that science has suggested, and, on the principle that God cannot be less than our highest thought, must be true.

13. I ought, therefore, to harmonize my life and conduct with the conception of God as revealed in Christ; I ought to rejoice in the love of God with an exceeding great joy; I ought to utterly trust that love with perfect rest of heart; I ought, in the strength His love gives, to turn from temptation and sin, and strive in all things to continually approach nearer and nearer to the standard of His will. And I ought to so control my consciousness as to habitually recognise the God of Christ as being the God of the universe, and thus endeavour to accomplish in myself the perfect unity of religion and science.

14. I ought to interpret the principle that God cannot be less than our highest conception of Him as applying not only to the Divine nature, but also to the Divine action. I ought, therefore, to regard the future with tranquil heart. For the conception of evolution as including individual conscious existence after death is a higher conception than its alternative, and, therefore, nearer the truth. In any case, the future must be better, not worse, than my expectation, and therein I ought to find sufficient certainty to give the heart rest.

15. I ought, in short, trusting the love of God, to love God in return with all my heart, and, as we are

all children of the one Father, my neighbour as myself.

Combining these in one expression, I ought to recognise, in feeling, thought, volition, life, the highest manifestation of God, and this involves the obligation to be Christian in the sense of believing, trusting, loving, obeying, and rejoicing in, God, as interpreted by Christ.

LECTURE VIII.

CERTAINTY AS CHRISTIAN (b.)

1. Introduction.

With my last lecture I completed the line of thought I undertook and promised to follow. I have not attempted to develop the argument further than Sub-Christian Theism. But I think there are not many who, having reached that point, will refuse to face for themselves the question: Can I rightly accept the God of Christ without accepting the Christ of God?

To deal with that question fully in these lectures was, as I saw from the first, impossible; and I therefore confined myself to the effort to lead your thoughts to the point where that question might be most profitably asked. But while thus leaving this most serious of all questions to be answered in sacred solitude, I have felt that it would be well to give, in this closing lecture, some considerations which may help to explain what Christians mean by certainty, and to clear away some remaining misapprehensions as to what the Catholic Faith is.

The final certainty of the Christian is the certainty of experience; and the one intellectual hope of winning the Agnostic is to set before him the reasonableness of interpreting his own experience in a Christian sense, and of taking the necessary steps to enlarge the experience he has. The eternal condition of the universe is God; the permanent condition of the highest life is Christ. Even if these two statements be regarded as, to begin with, mere assumptions, they are yet assumptions which are more and more fully justified as we go on. The congruity of belief in God, and in Christ, with all other fundamental truths is itself an argument of the most strictly scientific kind; and the experience which, for Western nations at least, reduces the whole question of religion to the alternatives of Christ or nothing, may be appealed to with unwavering confidence. The one *moral* hope of drawing the agnostic to the side of Christ, is Christ Himself, rightly presented. It is, I think, worse than useless, to begin with an appeal to the authority of the Church. The recognition of that authority must come, if it come at all, as the result, not as the condition, of faith in Christ. And this faith to be permanent must be the outcome of the Agnostic's interpretation of his own experience. Nevertheless, it may aid that interpretation if he see clearly what the grounds and conditions of Christian certainty are.

2. Intuition of God.

We have seen that the basal certainty of Theism is the intuition that God cannot be less than the highest of His manifestations, cannot be less than the Christianity of Christ and His Church represents Him to be. The only abiding difficulty is the "logical" one—If God be the Cause of all phenomena, then He must be the Cause of the phenomena classed as evil, and hence, if the character of the cause is to be inferred from the quality of the effect, we are, on this ground, as truly entitled to say that the Cause is evil as we are to affirm that He is good. The logical dilemma may be modified in form, but I do not think it has yet been met in essence. Perhaps it may be met in the future. But whether it is ever satisfactorily dealt with or not, the Theist's answer is that the question is vitally one of intuition, not of "logic." There are postulates which cannot be, and there are postulates which ought not to be, questioned. The absolute goodness of God is a moral postulate. There is no need to go into the origin and history of intuitions. For, as we have already seen, the authority of an intuition does not depend upon its history and origin. The authority of the intuition of truth and right is the fact that it is truth, it is right, which is seen. And the authority of the intuition of God—in Whom truth and right are absolute—is the fact that it is God Who is seen. The Catholic Faith has for its deepest foundation the intuition of God as Moral Cause.

3. Knowledge of God.

We have also seen that there is entire agreement between Agnostic Philosophy and the Catholic Faith as to the incomprehensibility of that Omnipresent Cause Whom the first calls the Inscrutable Power and the second the Invisible God. Both assert that God is greater than language can express, imagination picture, emotion feel, or thought conceive. It is, however, to be confessed that there have been many vexatious misunderstandings on both sides. Unwary theologians, intent on presenting some one aspect of the truth, have drifted into phraseology not always reconcilable with the Catholic Faith as a whole, and have thus produced erroneous impressions as to what that Faith really is. They have suggested limitations which could not be squared with the doctrine of God's illimitable greatness. They have unconsciously narrowed and lowered the idea of the Divine until it had become less than the highest idea of man.

But neither can it be denied that philosophers have fallen into errors of their own. So intent were they on the absolute, the unconditioned, the infinite, that practically they reduced the idea of God to the idea of nothing. For to what else can amount the idea of the absolute without a Being Who is absolute, of the unconditioned without a Being Who is unconditioned, of the infinite without a Being Who is infinite? In seeking to remove all limitations they abolished all Being, and thus made, in all sense of

reality, the absolute less than the relative, the unconditioned less than the conditioned, the infinite less than the finite.

Sometimes, indeed, errors are attributed to thinkers which exist only in the misapprehension of their critics. Thus, for example, Mr. Frederick Harrison regards Mr. Spencer as teaching a doctrine which seems to me almost the exact opposite of what he really holds. He says :—" Mr. Spencer must remember that in his religion of the Unknowable, he stands almost alone. He is, in fact, insisting to mankind, where all men have some opinion, on one of the most gigantic paradoxes in the history of thought. I know myself of no single thinker in Europe who has come forward to support this religion of an Unknowable Cause, which cannot be presented in terms of consciousness, to which the words motion, will, intelligence cannot be applied with any meaning, and yet which stands in the place of a supposed anthropomorphic Creator. Mr. George H. Lewes, who of all modern philosophers was the closest to Mr. Spencer, and of recent English philosophers the most nearly his equal, wrote ten years ago : ' Deeply as we feel the mystery of the universe and the limitation of our faculties, the foundations of a creed can only rest on the known and knowable.' With that, I believe every school of thought, but a few dreamy mystics have agreed. All with one consent disclaim making a religion of the Unknowable." I am quite aware that there are great numbers who are no less mistaken

than Mr. Harrison as to what Mr. Spencer's teaching is. A theologian of great and deserved eminence happened to refer to Mr. Spencer as the arch-Agnostic of the age. I asked him what grounds he had for that opinion. He replied by quoting two or three sentences, as he supposed, from Mr. Spencer. I asked him from what book he was quoting. He said, "First Principles." I replied, "Pardon me; I know that book well, and, with the exception of the unfortunate use of the word 'unknowable,' there is nothing in it which favours Agnosticism in the anti-Theistic sense." He was amazed at my assertion. But, on pointing out that Mr. Spencer could only mean by unknowable "incomprehensible," and on reading, in this light, the passages already quoted, he exclaimed, "Then it passes all understanding why Mr. Spencer should not be a Theist." I said, "Perhaps he is, but does not choose to call himself by the name. But, whatever *he* is, his philosophy is distinctly Theistic up to an advanced point." I was not much surprised, though I was sorry, that the theologian in question should be in error on the points named, for I have met very few even of Mr. Spencer's followers who had mastered the book. One of them said to me, "I have read it, not without violent headaches, half a dozen times, and I can make nothing of it." Another said, "Well, you have convinced me Mr. Spencer is not an Agnostic; but now *I am in relation* to him, for I do not know what he is." Another remarked, "I always thought I was an

Agnostic and also a Spencerian. But now I do not see how I can be both."

4. Agnosticism and Catholicism.

I hold, nevertheless, that Mr. Spencer's doctrine on this point, excepting always his tantalising use of the word unknowable, is not essentially different from that of the Catholic Church. For he owns that God is what he calls unknowable not in the sense of unknown, but in the sense of more than known. Our consciousness of the Divine, he maintains, fills up and overflows all limits. "Besides that definite consciousness of which logic formulates the laws, there is an indefinite consciousness which cannot be formulated." To say that God transcends all that we set forth by the terms omnipotence, omnipresence, omniscience, intelligence, and will, is the very reverse of saying that He is not known at all. In the sense in which Mr. Spencer uses the word we may all say God is unknowable ; that is, "thou canst not find out the Almighty unto perfection." According to Mr. Spencer's philosophy, we are more than justified in holding all the Catholic Faith requires. For both are one in saying that whatever human conscience needs of the holy, human intelligence of the true, human feeling of the beautiful, the human will of the strong, the human heart of love, the human spirit of life, is more than met by the unsearchable riches of God.

5. Faith in the Blessed Trinity.

Nor can it be truly said that the Agnostic philosophy contains one word that is necessarily hostile to the Catholic doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. It being certain that God is not less than the highest doctrine we can formulate sets forth, the only question is, which of the two conceptions—the Unitarian or the Trinitarian—is the higher, it being understood that neither can claim to be an absolute statement of the truth. The only plea that can, apparently, be urged on behalf of the former is that it represents God as less incomprehensible than the latter. But as it is certain God must transcend the highest conceptions we are able to form, this plea is rather an argument against than an argument for Unitarianism. For the rest, it must be noted that there is nothing in Unitarianism, except its limitations, which is not contained in Trinitarianism. The latter is as emphatic as the former in its assertion of the Unity of God. But it transcends the former in its recognition of the nature of the Godhead as not less than social, an idea as true to what we know of the nature of consciousness as it is to the conditions of love. Thus the idea of the fellowship of God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—as measurelessly transcends the idea of eternal solitude, as does that of love going out in infinite overflow the notion of self-sufficingness. Thus the Fatherhood of God is before all time, not a relation newly appearing with the advent of angel or man.

6. The Normal Relations of God and Man.

The Son of God and God the Son are to the Catholic convertible terms. For He Who was Son of God before all worlds is eternally Son and eternally God. It does not belong to us—save only by special revelation—to trace or assign the action of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the Universe, the world, the Church. But it belongs to the truth of fact to say where the Father is, there the Son is, where the Son is, there the Spirit is, and hence we live and move, and have our being in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This, of course, applies to all that have being, motion, life. I do not know whether it is wise to make such distinctions as these, but, perhaps, it is permissible to think specially—in the relation of the Deity to the Universe—of the Father as the Fountain of Being, of the Son as the Source of Creative Energy, of the Spirit as the Spring of Life. Then, perhaps, touching the relation of God to man, it may be said again the Father is the Fountain of our Being, the Son as Creator forms us in His image as sons, and the Spirit as Giver of life enables us to live as sons. That, perhaps, may be taken as signifying the normal relation. I do not say that certainty fixes on this form of presentation. Our certainty is that the normal relation is not less than this.

7. The Incarnation of the Son of God.

There seems, then, a special fitness in the Scriptural and Catholic doctrine that the Son—on Whom our

normal sonship depends—became incarnate in order to abolish the abnormal, unfilial state of man. He who made us sons creatively in structure, function, destination, makes us sons again re-creatively, in His work as Redeemer of the world, restoring the violated relation to the Father, and inspiring the energy of love which, under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, becomes the power of an endless life. It is a mistake, sometimes made, to suppose that the Church regards His redemptive work as beginning only at the birth of Christ. On the contrary, the Church regards the redemptive work as beginning when human sin began, and as continuing while human sin continues. There is a similar mistake touching the extent of redemption. The Catholic doctrine is that there is no territorial limit to the direct influence of Christ. Wherever man is, the Redeemer is, and the only bound to His redemptive work in man is the will not to be redeemed of man himself. It is altogether an error to say that the Catholic Church teaches salvation to be impossible outside of her pale, if by that is meant she regards all those who are not in conscious communion with her as irrecoverably lost. But the doctrine is true enough rightly understood. The sacrament of intention covers the case. She, in fact, regards all those who would consciously yield themselves to Christ, if they consciously knew Him, as being members of the Church in virtue of that baptism which they would certainly receive were it in their power. I repeat, the only limit to the

redeeming influence of Christ is the limit imposed by a perverse will. In the case of the conscious, rebellion is rebellion against Christ the Good ; in the case of the unconscious it is rebellion against Good as Good, which is, nevertheless, Christ. And this is the condemnation in both cases that, though light is come, they *choose* darkness rather than light because—the reflex influence of conduct on choice—their deeds are evil. Once more, I do not say that what is here stated is exactly the truth ; but assuredly the truth is not less than this.

There is not one aspect of human thought with which the Catholic Church is not in sympathy on its positive side, for which it has not the deepest compassion on its negative side. It asserts with Atheism the eternity of being ; with Positivism the reality of the positive ; with Secularism the importance of the secular ; with Agnosticism the incomprehensibility of the Omnipresent Power ; with Spiritualism and Theosophy the need of communion with the other world ; with Socialists and Democrats the need of greater fraternal fellowship in this world ; with Calvinists a real election ; with Arminians the boundless range of the Atonement ; with Scripturists the enormous value of the Holy Scriptures ; with critics the obligation to fearless inquiry ; with Low Churchmen the imperative need of Evangelical doctrine ; with High Churchmen the value of Sacramental teaching ; with the Denominationalist the desirability of a certain autonomy ; with the Ultra-

montane the advantage of central authority. But all these she seeks to see from the standpoint and in the Spirit of Christ, that she may supply to each what is lacking, and unite them all in the One Church Catholic and Indivisible.

8. Summary.

1. There is a society called the Christian Church which professes to have been founded by Christ, and which sets forth a book called the New Testament, containing what professes to be an historically true account of Jesus Christ.

2. It is not questioned that the Church has been in existence from the first century, and that the book as a whole was in existence in the second century.

3. A part of it was admittedly written in the first century.

4. A part was admittedly written within thirty years of the Crucifixion.

5. The forgery and mythical theories cannot account for the existence of the New Testament.

6. There is no reason to believe that the writers intended to deceive.

7. Criticism has detected no proof that, as regards the main facts, they were deceived.

8. It is possible to account for the Church by Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ, on the supposition that He was what the New Testament represents Him to be, but not otherwise.

9. It is inconceivable to those who believe in moral freedom that Christ should be less than this.

10. It is inconceivable to those who believe in moral freedom that God can be less than Christ represents Him to be.

11. Christ claims belief, trust, love, and obedience, and regards these as obligatory on every one to whom His claim has been duly presented.

12. Belief, trust, love, obedience rendered to Himself, are regarded by Him as necessarily consequent upon belief in God as revealed by Him.

13. If it were conceivable that God should demand obedience to what was wrong, disobedience would be a duty. But it is not conceivable that God should make any such demand. If, therefore, any such demand appear to be made, we must conclude that there has been one of two mistakes. Either we have been in error in concluding that the demand was made, or we have been in error in concluding that it was wrong.

14. If Christ, were that conceivable, should make a wrong demand, disobedience would be a duty. But that, on the supposition that He was what the New Testament represents Him to be, is not conceivable. Therefore, should He appear to require anything wrong, it is certain that a mistake has been made, not by Him, but in the report, or in the transcription or interpretation of the report.

15. It is necessary, after all deductions from the Gospels required by just and reverent criticism, to

regard Jesus Christ as having been what He claimed to be, and to submit our lives to the control of the principles He taught and lived. Anything less than this would fall short of what is already admitted in the recognition of Him as the highest manifestation of God.

16. As Christ has given us the highest interpretation of God, so has the Church Catholic given us the highest interpretation of Christ. It is admitted that an absolutely perfect revelation of God, or an utterly faultless interpretation of that revelation, is not to be looked for; but that we are bound to take the highest view we can find as being the nearest approach to the absolute given in that consciousness which transcends definition.

17. He who waits for ideal Catholic perfection—himself doing nothing to bring it about—wastes his life and ruins his influence, and so fails in his acknowledged duty. It is plainly obligatory not only to hold the highest view we can compass, but also practically to give effect to that view in our conduct and life. The fellowship of the Catholic Church, if not the highest conceivable, is the highest attainable; and that for us means the fellowship of the Anglican branch of the Church Catholic.

18. It is also obligatory to distinguish between the One Faith for all the Church and such accretions—whether Puritan or Roman—as the ignorance or perversity of men may have added, or may be still disposed to add, in particular Churches.

19. It is important to remember that all doctrine is directly or indirectly related to life and conduct; and that catholicity of faith and catholicity of life are each incomplete without the other.

20. Common life — including therein, feeling, thought, and will — in, by, and for Christ, is the Catholic ideal.

To the Catholic it is certain that the Church universal is the highest interpreter of Christ, and Christ the highest interpreter of God. There appears no escape from the twofold conclusion that Catholic doctrine at all points transcends its rivals, and that it is therefore the nearest to the perfect truth. Christ cannot be less than He is represented to be by the Church, and God cannot be less than He is represented to be by Christ. Fidelity to his own principles, reasonably worked out, will lead the Agnostic to confess in thought, feeling, action, the Catholic Faith, as the expression of the loftiest truth, right, and beauty in religion known to us, and as the symbol of God's love which inspires the noblest life possible to man.

SUMMARIES.

FIRST SERIES.

I. The Duty of Inquiry.

1. It is certain that every one believes something.

2. It is extremely probable that every one believes something that is not true.

3. It is extremely probable that every one omits something that is true.

4. It is agreed that there is a proportion in things, and that some beliefs, as compared with others, are very important.

5. It is eminently desirable to examine ourselves as to whether our more important beliefs are well founded.

6. It is eminently desirable to examine ourselves as to whether we have omitted from our beliefs important things which are true.

7. In considering the claims of any "belief" we are under obligation not to accept or reject from like or dislike of the quarter from which it comes to us.

8. In considering what is said against any belief, we are under obligation to distinguish objections which are, from those which are not, fatal.

It is certainly our duty to do what we can to make sure that the beliefs we hold are well founded, and that we have omitted nothing important which we ought to believe.

II. The Practical Question.

1. It is certain that the question of Theism is not one of belief alone.

2. Organic Theism stands for what may be called the organic relations of man to God.

3. In the organic sense of the word, all men are Theists, even those who call themselves Atheists ; just as all Englishmen are Englishmen, even those who depart from their native land and dwell among foreigners.

4. There is, also, Ethical Theism, which is life in harmony with our relations to God.

5. Ethical Theism, like Organic, may be, and occasionally is, unconscious ; *i.e.*, a man may be good without having recognised that God is the source of his goodness.

6. The question of Ethical Theism is not, "What is the good of believing in God?" or, "Since everything is governed by law, would not the universe go on the same if there were no God?"—but, "What obligations and duties arise out of the relations between God and man?"

It is certain that the practical question for me is : Ought I to interpret the Omnipresent Power in an ethical sense? and, if so, how ought this interpretation to be applied to my every-day life?

III. Fidelity to Evidence.

1. I ought to be faithful to the things I hold to be true.

2. I ought to ascertain whether this faithfulness requires me to recognise other things the truth of which I have not heretofore seen.

3 I ought not to use, without warning, the same words in different senses, unless the context shows which I intend.

4. I ought not to exaggerate the importance of any particular science as against the whole, nor the importance of the whole as against the common experience which is before, in, and after science.

5. I ought to keep vividly before my consciousness the facts and principles without which science could not exist, though science cannot prove their existence.

6. In order to be sure that my conclusions are intellectually justified, I ought to ascertain the facts, and test the inferences drawn therefrom, in accordance with the laws of the several sciences concerned.

7. Inasmuch as difficulties are not necessarily contradictions,

their presence is not of itself a reason for unbelief; objections which are fatal I ought to carefully distinguish from those which are not; and I ought to accept those conclusions for which, notwithstanding difficulties or objections, the evidence is in quality and quantity greatest.

8. I ought not to demand logical, mathematical, or mechanical evidence for real existences in the sense of evidence *derived from* logic, mathematics, or mechanics; but I have the right to demand that the evidence given shall be in harmony with, or, at least, not contradictory of the laws of quality, quantity, force, which those sciences set forth, unless there should be reason to suppose those sciences mistaken in any point.

9. While I ought to recognise and obey, in all evidence, the laws contained in the several sciences to which the evidence relates—logic, mathematics, mechanics, astronomy, geology, biology, psychology, sociology—I am bound to remember that the evidence itself must arise directly or indirectly out of experience, interpreted in the light of those sciences, and that no interpretation can be valid as against ascertained facts.

10. I ought to remember that as these laws are our guides in determining the accuracy of our science in all departments of thought, and as experience in its widest meaning is our only means of acquiring knowledge at all, it is extremely important to make no mistakes as to the nature or application of these laws, or what it is they can show.

11. I ought to recollect that though it is, perhaps, impossible to have experience of anything without some experience of its relations, yet it is the thing, not its relations, that one is thinking of; that when testimony is borne to any fact, it may have many implications which never entered the mind of the witness; that testimony is directed to facts, not to explanations, and is therefore not anti but ante-scientific.

12. I ought not to require, for controversial purposes, any kind or degree of evidence not required for scientific purposes. Experience is of two kinds—personal and "foreign." The greater part of science is necessarily based on the experiences of others. That I have not personal experience of Christ in the flesh is not therefore to be urged against the truths of Christi-

anity. Again, while I am entitled to test thoroughly the evidence, in testimony to such facts as are within ordinary capacity there is no need of "scientific experts."

13. As, on the one hand, I ought not to conclude that because one book in a set is true that therefore all others associated with it are true also—even though it may be customary to bind them in one cover—so on the other, I ought not to regard the failure of one book to pass the ordeal of criticism as evidence against even one of the remainder, much less against them all. So, also, a corrupt passage here or there does not prove the rest corrupt.

14. I ought not to forget that there is no distinct science of Christian evidence; that the same laws which obtain elsewhere obtain here also; that the term Christian relates only to the subject-matter, not to the evidence. No doubter, therefore, has the right to condemn real evidential writers as if their method were not that of science; and no Christian has the right to try to escape the point of the sceptic's sword by retreating into a misty land where no laws of evidence are obeyed.

15. I ought to note well the different senses in which the word "certainty" is used. It is, I think, unquestionable that as we have emotional and moral, as well as intellectual knowledge, so have we emotional and moral, as well as intellectual certainty. The real nature of what is called certainty is an extremely interesting question, and will, in one point of view, be considered in the following lectures. But what we may call here for distinction's sake reasonable certainty can only arise from the consciousness that the conclusions drawn are justified by the evidence given; and that the evidence is of trustworthy quality and of adequate quantity as tested by the recognised Laws of Belief.

Seeing, then, that there are recognized laws of evidence, instead of abandoning myself to the conclusion that no conclusion is possible, I ought to set myself, with resolute and constant will, to discover, and act on the discovery, how far, and in what sense, it is my duty to become a Christian.

IV. The Preoccupation of Secularism and Positivism.

1. Secular properly means "pertaining to the age," Positive, "that which is certain."

2. But as each succeding age inherits much from the preceding age, the secular and the positive must embrace what is received from the past as well as what is added in the present.

3. The secular and the positive must, therefore, be regarded, unless an arbitrary limit is fixed, as equivalent to that which pertains to all the recognisable past and present.

4. But the recognisable past and present enable us from the observed persistence of force to foresee and foretell the future, in certain aspects and to a certain extent.

5. The definition of the secular and positive must, therefore, be amended, so as to include the new element; in other words, "secular" means pertaining to the recognisable past, present, and future, and positive the same thing under the aspect of certainty.

6. But this definition makes the secular and positive equivalent to the scientific.

7. Unless, therefore, the secular and positive spirit or "ism" and the scientific spirit or "ism" be regarded as identical, the definition must be further amended.

8. If they are identical, whatever may be truly alleged of science may be also truly alleged of secularism and positivism.

9. But science, if it cannot affirm, cannot deny a future life. If, therefore, any spirit or system, professing to be secular and positive, requires unbelief in a future life, it is, so far forth, according to the definition given, really unsecular and unpositive.

10. Science, if it does not affirm, does not deny the existence of God. A system or spirit, therefore, which requires unbelief in the existence of God, is, so far forth, according to the definition given, really unsecular and unscientific.

11. Science implies the existence of an Omnipresent Power manifested in all phenomena. Any spirit or system, therefore, which refuses to recognise the Omnipresent Power is, so far

forth, anti-scientific, and, according to the definition given, really anti-secular and anti-positive.

12. If, therefore, the secular and scientific spirit be one, it is a misuse of the word "secularism" or positivism, to employ it either as implying, or as equivalent to Atheism.

13. But, as we have seen, there is not simply a spirit, there is a denomination calling itself Secularist, whose principles are confessedly Atheistic. It follows that, so far forth, this so-called secular body is unscientific. We have also seen that Positivism is confessedly Atheistic. It follows that it also is, so far forth, unscientific. But if Positivism and Secularism be defined as equivalent to science, then "Positivism" and "Secularism" are really unpositive and unsecular; in other words, they are self-contradictory.

14. The preoccupation of Secularism or Positivism as a system or a spirit is not, therefore, justified, and its veto on inquiry vanishes.

15. If Secularism is not to be defined as equivalent to science, it is bound to show that its veto has scientific authority, and this implies that the way of inquiry is open.

The Secularist or the Positivist, therefore, is not justified in assuming the questions at issue to be outside the range of inquiry, for this is the thing to be proved, and, without inquiry, cannot be proved.

V. The Veto of Naturalism.

1. The Natural properly means pertaining to Nature.

2. Nature is equivalent to the universe considered as what it has been, is, and is becoming. It therefore includes in itself and its method all "spirit," "matter," force, life, consciousness, volition, conduct.

3. Whether we include space and time in the universe will depend on the sense in which we use those words. It seems fitting to say that the universe exists in space and time rather than that the universe is absoluteiy infinite and eternal.

4. Even if infinite and eternal, then, if we admit an Omnipresent Power of which the natural is the manifestation, that Power must be the absolute Infinite, the absolute Eternal.

5. The "supernatural," in any case, can be legitimately used only as signifying that which is superior to nature, *i.e.*, the Omnipresent Power of which nature is the manifestation.

6. It follows that, apart from the question whether time and space as infinite are to be regarded as modes of the Divine existence, the Omnipresent Power and Nature are exhaustive terms. Besides these, nothing.

7. It follows that the "natural" order and the "supernatural" order are not two, but one. If we are thinking of the manifestation the order is natural; if we are thinking of the power manifested it is supernatural.

8. It will not be denied that truth, or rather the knowable, is larger than knowledge; that knowledge is larger than classified knowledge; that nature is larger than the science of nature; and that there have been, and are known phenomena the knowledge of which has not yet been organized into science.

9. Miracles and answers to prayer may, for anything that science can say to the contrary, be real phenomena of this class.

10. They are not, then, "supernatural," except in the sense in which all the universe is supernatural, *i.e.*, with relation to its cause.

11. The questions to be asked are then, these:—Are they true phenomena? What do they mean? And what are their laws?

12. It is but truth to fact to so order our feeling, thinking, and willing that our consciousness should continually respond to nature not only as to existence, but also as to method, especially in the recognition of the supreme dignity and authority of truth and right.

13. It is but truth to fact to so order our feeling, thinking, and willing that our consciousness should be continuously and proportionately sensitive to the "supernatural" Cause.

14. This continuous recognition of the Omnipresent Power—a recognition involving fitting ideas, fitting emotions, and fitting actions, which, when justly developed, become the "Obedience of the Faith," constitutes the essence of religion.

It is certain that in the light of the doctrine that all things

whatsoever are in the natural order rightly interpreted the objection of "Naturalism" falls to the ground, and there is therefore no longer question as to the possibility but only as to the actuality of the "facts" on which Christianity is based. It is further certain, from the nature of the case, that only he who is already a theist in the sense described, can profitably discuss the claims of Christianity itself on the intellect, the conscience, and the will.

VI. The Witness of Evolution.

1. Evolution is a method or process, not a force.

2. It is a method in which the Omnipresent Power works.

3. It includes the operation of ethical force.

4. This ethical force modifies cosmic processes

5. This ethical force is a manifestation of the Omnipresent Power.

6. There is no reason to confine the operation of the ethical force to our globe.

7. As the Being whom it manifests is omnipresent, analogy suggest that the modification of the cosmic processes by ethical force may be going on throughout the universe.

8. It is thus not improbable that there may be even now in preparation what are called the new heavens and the new earth.

9. As the ethical force modifies cosmic process in other respects, it is possible it may modify it in the sense of our preparation for the new heavens and new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

10. As ethical results are of higher rank than cosmic process, the latter, when painful, may be borne with patience for the sake of the former.

11. If the ethical force secures perpetual continuity of "sinless and happy existence," then in the range of our whole life our time of pain is, by comparison, but as a fragment of a second to a millennium of millenniums.

12. Whether the ethical force similarly works in the case of all forms of sentient life, the evidence is scanty; but it seems permissible to believe it.

The philosophy of evolution renders it certain that the action of the ethical force which modifies cosmical process, cannot be less than that set forth in the Catholic Faith and by the Catholic Church. Unless, therefore, the agnostic can find and live a higher presentation of the truth, he cannot escape the obligation in the direction of Catholicism, implied in the principle that one ought to be and do the highest he knows.

SECOND SERIES.

I. Certainty as Faith in Truth and Right.

1. I see that faith in Beauty, Truth, and Right is fundamental, and is common to all earnest feeling, thinking, and willing, whether in religion or in science.

2. I see that just as the beauty of anything is sufficient reason for admiration, so is the truth of anything sufficient reason for belief, the right of anything sufficient reason for approval.

3. I am conscious that I "ought" to be beautiful and put away unbeauty; that I ought to be true, and put away untruth; that I ought to be right, and put away unright.

4. I see that, so far as each recognizes, as ultimates, Beauty, Truth, and Right, or in the order of actual inquiry, truth, right, beauty, so far there is ground common to religion and science; and, in fact, in that experience which precedes differentiation, they are not two but one.

5. I see that the recognition of these ultimates implies that dueness or oughtness is absolute, in the sense that ignorance does not abolish obligation. I ought to be and do—that is, it is fitting, owing, due, that I should be and do—what is beautiful, true, right, even if my consciousness does not at present respond to these.

6. It follows that it is necessary to distinguish two kinds of obligation, the one what is called absolute, the other what is called relative; the first referring to the dueness in itself, the other to the dueness in its relation to knowledge and power.

7. Postponing for the present this distinction, I see plainly enough, as every one must see who thinks at all, that so far as

that which the Catholic Faith sets forth is beautiful, I am under obligation to admire; so far as it is true, I am under obligation to believe; so far as it is right, I am under obligation to obey.

I ought, then, to recognize, both theoretically and practically, beauty, truth, and right as authoritative ultimates without which neither science nor religion has any validity, and I ought to confess that the "intuitive" of or "belief in" these ultimates constitutes what may be called the foundation faith o both religion and science.

II. Certainty as Scientific.

It is scientifically certain there is :—

1. Consciousness.
2. Consciousness of effects.
3. Consciousness of effect on self.
4. Consciousness of relation.
5. Consciousness of relation as likeness.
6. Consciousness of relation as difference.
7. Consciousness of likeness or difference in quality.
8. Consciousness of likeness or difference in quantity.*
9. Consciousness of qualitative and quantitative likenesses and differences as characteristics of existent beings and activities.
10. Consciousness of beings and activities in space and time, as matter, motion, and force.
11. Consciousness of beings and activities called spirit, action, power.
12. Consciousness of beings and activities manifesting truth, right, and beauty.
13. Consciousness of an implied cause, as Omnipresent Power.
14. Consciousness of an implied test, called in brief the inconceivability of the negative.

Unless I am prepared to say there is no consciousness, no effect, no self; no relation, no likeness, no difference; no being,

* Including, of course, number.

no space, no time; no something called matter, no motion, no force; no something called spirit, no action, no power; no beauty, no truth, no right; no cause, no omnipresent power, no test of certainty, I must acknowledge consciousness, as described above, to be scientifically certain, and hold, as a postulate indispensable to science, the existence of a Universal cause called the Omnipresent Power.

III. Certainty as Religious.

1. Consciousness is.
2. Effects are produced on consciousness.
3. The ultimate cause of those effects is a Power.
4. That Power is Omnipresent.
5. The Omnipresent Power is manifest in all phenomena.
6. The Omnipresent Power is the cause of all phenomena.
7. The Omnipresent Power is not force, but its cause.
8. The Omnipresent Power is not matter or motion, space or time, but their cause.
9. The Omnipresent Power is not less than spiritual.
10. The Omnipresent Power is not less than conscious.
11. The Omnipresent Power is not less than volitional.
12. The Omnipresent Power is not less than true, right, beautiful.
13. The Omnipresent Power is not less than good.
14. The Onmipresent Power is not less than love.
15. The Omnipresent Power so described is identical with God.

I ought to recognise, both theoretically and practically, the fact that, whatever its special forms, Theism has for its basal certainty the truth that the Power manifested in all phenomena cannot be less than its manifestation, cannot be less than the God of Christ.

IV. Certainty as Theistic.

1. There is consciousness of a standard called Right, Truth Beauty.
2. Correspondence with this standard is rightness, trueness, beautifulness.

3. The Standard is not less than an Ideal.

4. The Ideal is, at least, as enduring as Evolution.

5. It is not less than co-extensive with the Universe.

6. Evolution may be regarded as continuous realization of the Ideal.

7. There is increasing consciousness of obligation to be right, true, beautiful.

8. There is consciousness of peace in proportion as the obligation is fulfilled.

9. There is consciousness of unease in proportion as it is not fulfilled.

10. The Ideal implied in Evolution is the Ideal of the Being that evolves, *i.e.*, God.

11. Rightness, trueness, beautifulness is correspondence with God.

12. Unrightness, untrueness, unbeautifulness is non-correspondence with God.

13. There are not three standards, but three in one, *i.e.*, to be unright is to be untrue and unbeautiful; to be untrue is to be unright and unbeautiful; to be unbeautiful is to be untrue and unright. So to be right is to be true and beautiful, to be true is to be right and beautiful, to be beautiful is to be right and true.

14. Nevertheless the order of emphasis is for us Rightness, Trueness, and Beautifulness; the order of obligation to be right, true, beautiful; the order of the opposite is unrightness, untrueness, unbeautifulness, whether as being and doing the things we ought not or as not being and doing the things we ought.

15. As we are bound to conclude that the Omnipresent Being or Power to Whose Ideal the Right, Truth, Beauty of the universe progressively responds is not less than conscious and volitional, so, also, are we bound to regard all manifestations of Himself, interpreted by this interpenetrating three in one, as expressions of His Will, and all correspondence with His Will as correspondence with Himself.

Omitting for the present the question of Organic Theism, it is certain that Ethical Theism ought to be regarded as the co-

ordination of thought, feeling, volition, conduct, with the Will of God, as the Will of the Absolutely Good.

V. Certainty as Sub-Christian.

Co-ordinating the preceding ideas with my feeling of obligation, I see no escape from the following conclusions, and I cannot but think that all those who do not so interpret the "mechanical" theory of the universe as to exclude the idea of duty altogether will agree with me herein :—

1. I ought to recognise God as the cause of consciousness, self, not-self; relation, likeness, difference; truth, right, beauty; quality, quantity, number; being, space, time; spirit, action, power; matter, motion, force.

2. I ought (1) to recognise God as the cause of all modes of being, and of all the relations in which they exist; and, therefore, of those relations the classification of which as true constitutes science as rational; the classification of which as right constitutes science as moral; the classification of which as beautiful constitutes science as æsthetic.

3. I ought (2) to recognise God as the cause of those relations the classification of which constitutes science under this three-fold aspect, relations existing among all modes of being, permeating the atom as the universe, the universe as the atom, constituting the threefold unity with which the human mind, as reason, conscience, and faculty of beauty, is concerned. These relations are abstractly those of quality (logic); those of quantity (including number, mathematics); abstract-concretely, those of force, in masses (molar mechanics); in molecules (molecular mechanics); concretely, those of the redistribution of matter and motion among the celestial bodies (astronomy); in the earth (geology in the larger sense); those of life (biology); those of mind on its spiritual and physical sides (psychology); those of society on its spiritual and physical sides (sociology); those of conduct on its spiritual and physical sides (ethology).

4. I ought (3) to recognise God as the cause of all science, and all science as spiritual, as relating to mind, mental, as relating to force, physical. It is a question to which the answer is scarcely yet possible whether mind and matter are co-exten-

sive; that is to say, whether there is not rudimentary life and intelligence even in atoms. Should the answer be yes, then will science be spiritual not only as now in its own nature, but as having for its object mental as well as physical phenomena everywhere. Thus astronomy and geology, for example, would be at the same time mental and physical. I use the word physical rather than material, because it is by no means clear, according to Mr. Spencer, that matter is anything in itself, other than a manifestation of force. It is, at least, certain that there are, whether co-extensive or not, two co-existing ranges, the mental and the physical, and that the first interprets both itself and the second, though the two be in essence one.

5. I ought to recognise God as the Omnipresent Cause of the universe in its relations of truth, right, and beauty. It is probable that science will one day recognise the entire universe as moral, that in short, everything, not endowed with will, is as it ought to be. But, at least, we may see that truth, right, and beauty are three in one, and are, like all else, caused by God. We must, therefore, endeavour to free ourselves from the evil influence of the word "secular" and the like, as if there were no sacredness in science. On the contrary, everything is sacred, because everything is, in one way or another, a true, righteous, and beautiful manifestation of God.

6. I ought to recognise the fact that we know God as far as we know His manifestations. (I am not prepared to deny that we have a direct and more than definite—therefore inexpressible—consciousness of Him. But I do not go into that now.) If, as we have seen, God is the cause of the effects we have classified, then we certainly know *Him* so far as we know *them*. They are quite right who say knowledge of effects gives us no title to affirm that we know God in any other sense. But that is not what I affirm. It is that we know God as Cause.

7. I ought, then, to conclude that God as their Cause is not less than force, motion, matter, power, action, spirit, number, quantity, quality, beauty, right, truth, difference, likeness, relation, not self, self-consciousness. But it is impossible to examine consciousness without finding therein intelligence, love,

and will. The cause of consciousness is therefore not less than intelligence, love, and will.

8. I ought to hold as a necessary inference from what has been already admitted that, outside of the sphere of voluntary action, and despite all "appearances" to the contrary, whatever is, is right.

9. I ought to hold that, within the sphere of voluntary action, it is our duty to adjust thought, feeling, volition to truth, right, and beauty. This adjustment implies recognition of, and obedience to, the highest knowledge of God wherever obtained, *i.e.*, whether "discovered" or "revealed."

10. I ought to hold the sphere of "natural" religion, and the sphere of "natural" science to be one and the same, but from two points of view. Each is not only co-extensive, but also identical with the other. The difference in point of view is this: Science contemplates the universe as the *manifestation* of God; religion contemplates the universe as the manifestation of *God*. In the latter aspect the wonder, awe, reverence, love, trust, gladness, the feeling of dependence, the feeling of the infinite, though occasioned by the manifestation, have for their object the Being manifested. We ought to control our consciousness until this response to the Divine becomes habitual.

11. Accepting evolution as a fact, I ought to regard the universe as not only become, but as becoming, and control my feeling in accordance with this truth. Touching a future so immense as to be unimaginable, we have thus the basis of a sure and certain hope. That what is to be will transcend all that has been and all that is is manifestly implied in the theory itself. But this ought to be kept before the mind until it becomes habitually present in consciousness, and intensifies the trust and joy with which we regard God.

12. As there is no accounting for Christ, except as, within the sphere of religion, the highest manifestation of the Divine, I ought to accept His interpretation of God with even more assured certainty than I accept the scientific interpretation of the manifestation of God in the universe. There is absolutely no conflict between the two. Science is either harmonious or silent as to the points on which He speaks. The love of God

for the individual, the Divine pity for suffering, the means of overcoming the power of sin, and of receiving eternal life, are His special subjects. It cannot be denied that His teaching is worthy of God, and one's nature recognises its truth with a certainty that is more than that of reason. With it, the conception of God transcends the utmost that science has suggested, and, on the principle that God cannot be less than our highest thought, must be true.

13. I ought, therefore, to harmonize my life and conduct with the conception of God as revealed in Christ; I ought to rejoice in the love of God with an exceeding great joy; I ought to utterly trust that love with perfect zest of heart; I ought, in the strength His love gives, to turn from temptation and sin, and strive in all things to continually approach nearer and nearer to the standard of His will. And I ought to so control my consciousness as to habitually recognise the God of Christ as being the God of the universe, and so accomplish in myself the perfect unity of religion and science.

14. I ought to interpret the principle that God cannot be less than our highest conception of Him as applying not only to the Divine nature, but also to the Divine action. I ought, therefore, to regard the future with tranquil heart. For the conception of evolution as including individual conscious existence after death is a higher conception than its alternative, and, therefore, nearer the truth. In any case, the future must be better, not worse, than my expectation, and therein I ought to find sufficient certainty to give the heart rest.

15. I ought, in short, trusting the love of God, to love God in return with all my heart, and my neighbours as myself.

Combining these in one expression, I ought to recognise, in feeling, thought, volition, life, the highest manifestation of God, and this involves the obligation to be Christian in the sense of believing, trusting, loving, obeying, and rejoicing in God, as interpreted by Christ.

IV.—Certainty as Catholic.

1. There is a society called the Christian Church which professes to have been founded by Christ, and which sets forth a

book called the New Testament, containing what professes to be an historically true account of Jesus Christ.

2. It is not questioned that the Church has been in existence from the first century, and that the book as a whole was in existence in the second century.

3. A great part of it was admittedly written in the first century.

4. A smaller part was admittedly written within thirty years of the Crucifixion.

5. The forgery and mythical theories cannot account for the existence of the New Testament.

6. There is no reason to believe that the writers intended to deceive.

7. Criticism has detected no proof that, as regards the main facts, they were deceived.

8. It is possible to account for the Church by Jesus Christ, and for Jesus Christ, on the supposition that He was what the New Testament represents Him to be, but not otherwise.

9. It is inconceivable to those who believe in moral freedom that Christ should be less than this.

10. It is inconceivable to those who believe in moral freedom that God can be less than Christ represents Him to be.

11. Christ claims belief, trust, love, and obedience, and regards these as obligatory on every one to whom His claim has been duly presented.

12. Belief, trust, love, obedience rendered to Himself, are regarded by Him as necessarily consequent upon belief in God as revealed by Him.

13. If it were conceivable that God should demand obedience to what was wrong, disobedience would be a duty. But it is not conceivable that God should make any such demand. If, therefore, any such demand appear to be made, we must conclude that there has been one of two mistakes. Either we have been in error in concluding that the demand was made, or we have been in error in concluding that it was wrong.

14. If Christ, were that conceivable, should make a wrong demand, disobedience would be a duty. But that, on the supposition that He was what the New Testament represents Him

to be, is not conceivable. Therefore, should He appear to require anything wrong, it is certain that a mistake has been made, not by Him, but in the report, or in the transcription or interpretation of the report.

15. It is necessary, after all deductions from the Gospels required by just and reverent criticism, to regard Jesus Christ as having been what He claimed to be, and to submit our lives to the control of the principles He taught and lived. Anything less than this would fall short of what is already admitted in the recognition of Him as the highest manifestation of God.

16. As Christ has given us the highest interpretation of God, so has the Church Catholic given us the highest interpretation of Christ. It is admitted that an absolutely perfect revelation of God, or an utterly faultless interpretation of that revelation, is not to be looked for; but that we are bound to take the highest view we can find as being the nearest approach to the absolute consciousness which transcends definition.

17. He who waits for ideal Catholic perfection—himself doing nothing to bring it about—wastes his life and ruins his influence, and so fails in his acknowledged duty. It is plainly obligatory not only to hold the highest view we can compass, but also practically to give effect to that view in our conduct and life. The fellowship of the Catholic Church, if not the highest conceivable, is the highest attainable; and that for us means the fellowship of the Anglican branch of the Church Catholic.

18. It is also obligatory to distinguish between the One Faith for all the Church and such accretions—whether Puritan or Roman—as the ignorance or perversity of men may have added, or may be still disposed to add, in particular Churches.

19. It is important to remember that all doctrine is directly or indirectly related to life and conduct; and that catholicity of faith and catholicity of life are each incomplete without the other.

20. Common life—including therein, feeling, thought, and will—in, by, and for Christ is the Catholic ideal.

To the Catholic it is certain that the Church universal is the highest interpreter of Christ, and Christ the highest interpreter of God. There appears no escape from the twofold conclusion

that Catholic doctrine at all points transcends its rivals, and that it is therefore the nearest to the perfect truth. Christ cannot be less than He is represented to be by the Church, and God cannot be less than He is represented to be by Christ. Fidelity to his own principles, reasonably worked out, will lead the agnostic to, at least, the threshold of the Catholic Faith as the expression of the loftiest truth, right, and beauty in religion, and as the symbol of God's love which inspires the noblest life possible to man.

THE PROPOSITIONS.

FIRST SERIES.

I.

It is certainly our duty to do what we can to make sure that the beliefs we hold are well founded, and that we have omitted nothing important which we ought to believe.

II.

It is certain that the practical question for me is: Ought I to interpret the Omnipresent Power in an ethical sense; and, if so, how ought this interpretation to be applied to my every-day life?

III.

Seeing that there are recognised laws of evidence, I ought, instead of abandoning myself to the conclusion that no conclusion is possible, to set myself, with resolute and constant will, to discover, and act on the discovery, how far, and in what sense, it is my duty to become, in conscious belief and voluntary conduct, a Theist and a Christian.

IV.

The Secularist or the Positivist is not justified in assuming the questions at issue to be outside the range of inquiry, for this is the thing to be proved, and, without inquiry, cannot be proved.

V.

It is certain that, in the light of the doctrine that all things whatsoever are in the natural order rightly interpreted, the objection of "Naturalism" falls to the ground, and there is therefore no longer question as to the possibility, but only as to

the actuality, of the "facts" on which Christianity is based. It is further certain, from the nature of the case, that only he who is already a Theist in the sense described, can profitably discuss the claims of Christianity itself on the intellect, the conscience, and the will.

VI.

The philosophy of evolution renders it certain that the action of the ethical force which modifies cosmical process, cannot be less than that set forth in the Catholic Faith and by the Catholic Church. Unless, therefore, the agnostic can find and live a higher presentation of the truth, he cannot escape the obligation in the direction of Catholicism, implied in the principle that one ought to be and do the highest he knows.

SECOND SERIES.

I.

I ought to recognise, both theoretically and practically, beauty, truth, and right as authoritative ultimates, without which neither science nor religion has any validity; and I ought to confess that the "intuition" of, or "belief in," these ultimates constitutes what may be called the foundation faith of both religion and science.

II.

Unless I am prepared to say there is no consciousness, no effect, no self; no relation, no likeness, no difference; no being, no space, no time; no something called matter, no motion, no force; no something called spirit, no action, no power; no beauty, no truth, no right; no cause, no Omnipresent Power, no test of certainty; I must acknowledge consciousness, as described above, to be scientifically certain, and hold, as a postulate indispensable to science, the existence of a universal cause called the Omnipresent Power.

III.

I ought to recognise, both theoretically and practically, the fact that, whatever its special forms, Theism has for its basal

certainty the truth that the power manifested in all phenomena cannot be less than its manifestation, cannot be less than the God of Christ.

IV.

It is certain that Theism ought to be regarded, not as a speculative belief simply, nor only as organic religion, but as the co-ordination of thought, feeling, volition, conduct with the Will of God—the absolutely good.

V.

I ought to recognise, in feeling, thought, volition, life, the highest manifestation of God, and this involves the obligation to be Christian, in the sense of believing, trusting, loving, obeying, and rejoicing in God, as interpreted by Christ.

VI.

To the Catholic it is certain that the Church universal is the highest interpreter of Christ, and Christ the highest interpreter of God. There appears no escape from the twofold conclusion, that Catholic doctrine at all points transcends its rivals, and that it is therefore the nearest to the perfect truth. Christ cannot be less than He is represented to be by the Church, and God cannot be less than He is represented to be by Christ. Fidelity to his own principles, reasonably worked out, will lead the agnostic to, at least, the threshold of the Catholic Faith as the expression of the loftiest truth, right, and beauty in religion, and as the symbol of God's love which inspires the noblest life possible to man.

NOTES.

1. The term Agnostic. (p. 1.)

It is well known that this term was adopted by Professor Huxley to indicate his own position in matters theological. Its common use, however, varies. Sometimes it simply means one who is convinced that the evidence is not adequate, sometimes one who, like the Positivist, holds that we have no faculty whereby God may be known, sometimes one whose position is that of Mr. Spencer that the "Absolute" is the object of the indefinite consciousness but not of the definite. Occasionally, it keeps near its etymology, and signifies simply one who does not know, without saying whether the ignorance is caused by want of capacity, or by want of information. Not unfrequently it stands for any unbeliever in Theism or Christianity. Its use in the text in the widest sense is, I hope, sufficiently justified.

2. Two Kinds of Unknowable. (p. 1.)

Apparently there are three, really there is only one. 1. The "Unknowable" Cause. 2. The "Unknowable" element in everything known. 3. Things that, though as to nature knowable, will yet, from their innumerableness, never be exhausted by man. But, as shown in the text, the first and second are cases not of the Unknowable, but of the incomprehensible. As to the third, of course if there exist things entirely beyond the sphere of human consciousness, their existence can only be a matter of inference, not of direct knowledge. These things we may imagine to be of two kinds, those for the knowledge of which we have no capacity, and those for which we have

capacity but not opportunity. If there be innumerable things knowable in existence, and our opportunities are confined to the numerable, then there must always be many things unknowable, not because their essential difference from other things puts them qualitatively beyond our powers of knowing, but because their greatness of number puts them quantitatively out of our reach. It is, however, open to us to imagine, or even to infer, the existence of beings who are not the objects of our consciousness at all, and these beings may have much sub-conscious influence upon our lives, an influence that, in a sense, is felt, but not its source. Nor do I know of anything in science which should render it incredible that "spirit with spirit may meet" in conscious communion, though one be in ordinary conditions chained to the earth by the body while the other belongs to a higher plane. But it is surely desirable to distinguish all these different kinds of knowing. As a question of consciousness a useful classification might run thus :

I. The more than definite consciousness. In this case, define as much as we may, we are conscious there is something beyond, something left out of the definition. Thus our consciousness of all ultimates is superdefinite. Examples are, being, space, time, matter, motion, force, spirit, action, power, quality, quantity, number, beauty, truth, right. All these, however, are so far definite as to enable us to distinguish them from each other, *e.g.* space and time, or matter and motion. The best example is the Divine source of the Ultimates. Here the only distinction possible is between the definite and the more than definite. Omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience, all wise, all righteous, all loving, stand for Being, our consciousness of which exceeds the highest definitions of presence, power, knowledge, wisdom, righteousness and love,—the "unconditioned Reality" or "Absolute" of which the "conditioned Reality" or "Relative" is the manifestation.

II. Definite consciousness which, when developed, constitutes science. It consists both of knowledge and belief, the first rationally classified ; the second, not only rationally classified, but also adequately "verified." To save the reader the trouble of reference, I repeat here the classification of the Sciences

founded on Mr. Spencer's essay with that title, with the warning, however, that the order must not be regarded as serial, but rather as so related that each division coincides with the remaining two, a relation that cannot be presented serially.

A. "Abstract Science.

1. "Universal Law of Relation: an expression of the truth that uniformities of connection obtain among modes of Being, irrespective of any specification of the natures of the uniformities of connection."

2. "Laws of Relation.

1. "That are qualitative; or that are specified in their natures as relations of coincidence or proximity in time and space, but not necessarily in their terms; the natures and amount of which are indifferent; LOGIC. This definition includes the laws of relation called necessary, but not those of relation called contingent. These last, in which the probability of an inferred connection varies with the number of times such connection has occurred in experience, are rightly dealt with mathematically."

2. That are quantitative. MATHEMATICS.

The student would do well to carefully read and note Mr. Spencer's sub-division of science under this head. It is extremely instructive and suggestive; but would be out of place here.

B. "Abstract-Concrete Science.

1. "Universal Laws of forces (tensions and pressures) as deducible from the persistence of force; the theorems of resolution and composition of forces."

2. "Laws of forces as manifested by matter.

1. "In masses, *Mechanics.*

2. "In molecules, *Molecular Mechanics.*"

The student is earnestly urged to study and ponder closely this second division in Mr. Spencer's classification. It will well repay months of thought.

C. "Concrete Science.

1. "Universal Laws of the continuous redistribution of matter and motion, which results in evolution where there is a

predominant integration of matter and dissipation of motion, and which results in dissolution where there is a predominant absorption of motion and disintegration of matter.

2. "Laws of the Redistribution of matter and motion actually going on.

1. "Among the celestial bodies in their relations to one another as masses: Astronomy.

2. "Among the molecules of any celestial mass :—"

(1) "As caused by the actions of these molecules on one another: ASTROGENY.

(2) "As caused by the actions of these molecules on one another, joined with the actions on them of forces radiated by the molecules of other masses: GEOGENY."

(It is under this last head that Mr. Spencer places not only Mineralogy, Meteorology, Geology, but also Biology, Psychology, and Sociology. So far as the classification is concerned no elements appear except matter and motion manifesting force in space and time. Notwithstanding this, it would be a mistake to regard Mr. Spencer as a Materialist.)

III. Less than definite consciousness. This can easily be distinguished from the more than definite, if we bear in mind the difference between knowledge that has never attained to definiteness and knowledge which has reached a high degree of definiteness.

IV. Indefinite Consciousness. It is a pity that in actual use this should sometimes mean more than definite, sometimes less than definite; for there can scarcely be a greater difference of meaning. The reader ought always to be on his guard here; otherwise he may disastrously admit as true of one meaning what is true only of the other. Let him reflect on what is meant by saying we have an indefinite consciousness of God, according as we mean one that never rises so high as definition, or one that fills in and overflows all definition.

But whether there is, or is not, anything absolutely unknowable to us, no one can tell. The unknowable is not a justifiable term; since to be able truly to say anything on the subject we

must, at least, know enough to say, it cannot be known. Even that is too much to affirm. Unknown is a far more accurate word. We should therefore content ourselves with the two terms the unknown and the incomprehensible. Better still, let

1. "Incomprehensible" stand for God alone.

2. "Ultimates" for final classes, or classes which seem to be final.

3. "Uncomprehended" for the not yet definitely known.

3. The Authority of Consciousness. (p. 3.)

Mr. Spencer says: "We cannot avoid accepting as true the verdict of consciousness that some manifestations are like one another and some unlike one another. It is useless to say, as Sir W. Hamilton does, that consciousness is to be presumed trustworthy until proved mendacious. It cannot be proved mendacious in this its primordial act. Nay more, the very thing supposed to be proved cannot be expressed without recognising this primordial act as valid; since unless we accept the verdict of consciousness that they differ, mendacity and trustworthiness become identical. Process and product of reasoning both disappear in the absence of this assumption. . . . It may, indeed, be often shown that what, after careless comparison, were supposed to be like states of consciousness, are really unlike; or that what were carelessly supposed to be unlike, are really like. But how is this shown? Simply by a more careful comparison, mediately or immediately made. And what does the acceptance of the revised conclusion imply? Simply that a deliberate verdict of consciousness is preferable to a rash one; or, to speak more definitely—that a consciousness of likeness or difference which survives critical examination must be accepted in place of one that does not survive—the very survival being itself the acceptance."

If we suppose an authority beyond consciousness, what is it? Clearly, it is only by its effect on consciousness that we can know its existence or its nature. For that which produces no effect upon us cannot be known by us to exist. This is, indeed, no proof of its non-existence, if we choose to assert an exis-

tence of which there is to us no evidence. Nor is the case altered if we substitute belief for knowledge. For though it is possible to believe on very slight evidence, yet it is scarcely possible that one should believe on what to him is no evidence at all. But if belief rest on evidence, however slight, the evidence is recognised as such by consciousness. If it be asserted that effects are produced on us of which we are wholly unconscious, it is enough to answer that while we remain unconscious of them we cannot know that they exist; it is only by their becoming in some way objects of consciousness that we are entitled to assert their existence. If it be urged that we are constrained to believe in the existence of a power which produces these effects and yet we do not know, are unconscious of, that power itself, we reply that the consciousness of the constraint to believe is assumed in the objection itself. It is not, of course, contended that we must be directly conscious of every object of belief; but the effects on consciousness of the asserted existence must be the warrant for that belief, otherwise there is no warrant at all.

The same conclusion is reached if we examine for a moment the nature of science. If we regard concrete science as that which treats of the laws of the continuous redistribution of matter and motion, it is evident that apart from consciousness we know nothing of Matter and Motion. If by abstract-concrete science we understand Mechanics, Molar and Molecular, the Laws of Forces as manifested by matter whether, in masses or molecules, it hardly needs stating that the appeal is to sensation, and inferences from sensation—that is, to consciousness. If abstract science is that which treats of the qualitative relations of modes of being given in logic, and the quantitative relations of modes of being given in mathematics, it is only by examination of consciousness that we can determine anything whatever concerning modes, or being, or relations; concerning quantity or quality. For what is science but knowledge; and knowledge equally implies a subject which knows and objects which are known. And what evidence is there of either except consciousness, and effects upon consciousness? If knowledge be relative—with the necessary implication of likeness and

difference—consciousness is equally implied; for likeness or difference of which we are not conscious is to us unknown. If the final analysis lead us to assert that knowledge is the consciousness of relation—of likeness and difference—clearly the authority of consciousness is a necessary postulate.

4. Atheism, Etc. (p. 16)

Atheism is, in fact, rather a feeling than a conviction. One naturally seeks to co-ordinate himself. The head's negation is the response to the heart's emptiness, as the head's affirmation is the response to the heart's fulness. Sometimes it happens that no co-ordination takes place. Then, whether on the side of Atheism or Theism, we may have the head negating or affirming while the heart makes no response, or the heart negating or affirming while the head is unconvinced. I do not, I trust, undervalue the intellectual arguments on either side; but the real question of Theism or Atheism is the interpretation of the indefinite consciousness which transcends logic.

Very often the name is given with extraordinary inaccuracy. For example, I have often heard Giordano Bruno referred to as an atheist; and yet Mr. Owen's summary of Bruno's belief contains the following passage: "All clearness, all evidence emanates from God. Senses, conscience, reflection, reason, all the modes and stages of intelligence, the different branches of knowledge, all the efforts of mind and of wisdom, need that Divine light which, itself inaccessible like the sun, still irradiates all objects within its luminous sphere. It is because every perception, every knowledge, whether of the senses or the mind, has God for its first source, for its principal organ, that man ought to rely implicitly upon verifiable evidence. God does not deceive, nor can He be deceived."

So far as possible, it is best to refrain from offensive classification of persons, and to deal with them simply as true inquirers who are in difficulties.

Especially ought we to be careful in speaking of sceptics to state clearly in relation to what they are sceptics. I suppose even the Bishop of Worcester would be considered a sceptic by those who adhere rigidly to the traditional view of the Pentateuch, and the justification of the term would, in their

opinion, be found in the following words from his contribution to the *Cambridge Companion to the Bible*: "Four different doctrines form the basis of the whole work, having their several characteristics of style, phraseology, etc. There is the principal Elohist (so called from his predominant use of Elohim as the name of God), the Jahvist, who prefers the name Jehovah (Jahveh), a second Elohist whose work has been taken up by an editor and so incorporated with that of the Jahvist that it is not always easy to distinguish them, and, lastly, the Deuteronomist. A final editor (or editors) has made use of all these materials and given them their present form." When one sees for what he is called a sceptic, one is able to judge of the meaning and weight of the epithet. But when the word is used indiscriminately of such divergent thinkers as Dr. Perowne and Mr. Foote, the former is likely to be credited by the ignorant with too much unbelief, the latter with too much faith.

5. Cases and Causes of Unbelief. (p. 16.)

I repeat here the classification given in my *Problems of Christianity and Scepticism* partly because I hope it may prove serviceable, and partly because I wish to add a word of warning as to its use.

1. *Cases of Unbelief.* There are ten cases of more or less conscious anti-Christianism. "The first is that too common attitude for which there is perhaps no better name than the ordinary one, Indifference, which is, however, only occasionally conscious of its opposition. The second is that of a mind so absorbed in study of the natural that the supernatural is regarded as an impertinent intruder, to be dismissed as summarily as possible. To this scientific indifference I give the name Naturalism. The third is that of the man who has studied honestly the evidence, but has not yet been able to arrive at any conclusion, affirmative or negative. For this attitude there can be no better term than the common word, Doubt. The fourth is that of the man whose predominant characteristic, whether he has really studied the evidence or not, is hatred of Christianity, or rather of what he supposes to be Christianity. This I express by Antipathy. The fifth is that of men who have come to a

negative conclusion as regards Christianity, and is commonly known as Deism. The sixth is that of one who, after study, has arrived at a completely negative conclusion, or Atheism. The seventh is that of one whose more or less negative conclusion is associated with the theological theory of Pantheism. The eighth arises when the negative conclusion is based on the philosophical theory of Agnosticism. The ninth is that of one whose negative conclusion is embodied in a system which is supposed to be a substitute for, or an improvement on Christianity, such as Positivism. The tenth is a specialization of the ninth under the name of Secularism. There are thus ten cases of non-belief: Indifference, Naturalism, Doubt, Antipathy, Atheism, Pantheism, Deism, Agnosticism, Positivism, Secularism. These ten cases I place together under the name Anti-Christianism. Yet not without hesitation as regards one of them—Doubt. For in this instance the conscious attitude seems to be alternately friendly and unfriendly, sometimes both at once. Moreover, doubt, in its very nature, implies some faith. On the other hand, it is, so long as it lasts, fatal to action. Perpetual doubt involves perpetual indecision of will.

2. "*Causes of Unbelief.*—The causes of anti-Christianism are numerous and varied, and as they rarely operate singly they are very difficult to classify. Here they are named according to their predominant features. The first is dissatisfaction with the general conditions of existence, and is known as Pessimism. The second is unwillingness to submit to moral restraints, and is really Rebellionism. The third is discontent with the existing constitution and relations of society, and may be termed Revolutionism. The fourth is an exaggerated estimate of the place and province of reason, and is known as Rationalism. The fifth is a mistaken view of the nature and authority of experience, and may be designated Experimentalism. The sixth is the misrepresentation of Christianity on the part of Christians, and may be called Unchristianism. As I have said, these causes rarely act singly, and they take all sorts of specific shapes in the history of individual lives. It will be observed that a real, though not a common cause, is not mentioned in the above list, I mean Contentment. It may, however, be

regarded as one cause of Indifference. It may be thought, and not unjustly, that the above classes somewhat overlap each other. But even so, the characteristic differences are sufficiently marked. Though they blend at their edges, the predominant colours are visible enough.

"There is yet an almost universal cause of anti-Christianism, which may be found more or less in all the others, and quite as often, proportionately to their numbers, among the educated as among the uneducated classes, *ignorance of Christianity and of Christian Evidences*. By ignorance I do not mean entire absence of knowledge, but knowledge that is incomplete, partial, distorted, and which is, therefore, the cause of innumerable misconceptions. That, notwithstanding all the efforts of a multitude of gifted authors, and the co-operation of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, the Religious Tract Society, the Christian Evidence Society, and the thirty thousand preachers who are supposed to proclaim the pure Gospel two or three times a week, great ignorance on the subject may still be found in every part of the country, and in every class of society, is unhappily absolutely certain. And, of course, I cannot but see that men are often ignorant because they do not wish to learn.

3. "*Method of meeting the Cases.*—We have now to indicate the ways in which it seems desirable to confront these opposing forces. Indifference may be attacked by appealing to facts which selfish content ignores; and which Christianity alone can render tolerable to man. The repose of Naturalism may be disturbed by bringing out the truth that religious phenomena are as real, and as imperatively demand consideration, as any other phenomena whatever. The uncertainty of Doubt may be converted into the confidence of Faith by enabling the doubter to see that, while Theism has difficulties of considerable magnitude, Atheism has difficulties immeasurably greater; and that, while the objections to Christianity are not to be ignored, the objections to unbelief are absolutely fatal. The passion of Antipathy, so far as it rises from error, will disappear when the true nature of Christianity is understood, and so far as it is caused by harsh treatment will vanish in the

presence and power of patient sympathy. Deism may be met by showing that Christianity is not its foe but its friend; not its destruction, but its completion; carrying natural religion to a higher level, while blending its noblest elements with a life that is loftier still. Atheism may be answered by showing how completely it overlooks that larger consciousness of man in which the infinite is shadowed, and by adducing the incredible alternatives of a universe unguided by intelligence, or of a universe that is itself intelligent. Pantheism may be confronted with the impossibility of attaching any definite meaning to what the pantheist says, and by the evidences of volition to be found, not somewhere, but everywhere in the evolution of the worlds. Agnosticism, it may be shown, proves no more than is already asserted in the Christian doctrine of the incomprehensibility of the infinite God, and disproves neither the possibility of apprehension nor the reasonableness of faith. Positivism, as a philosophy and as a religion, may be exposed as suicidal, since, in the one case, a philosophy of phenomena that has in it only the phenomenal, in the other a religion of humanity that has in it only the human, are each a contradiction in terms. Secularism, so far as it is common, may be proved to be noble in proportion to the Christian elements it contains, and, so far as it is distinctive, to be only a synonym for this or that form of unbelief, but usually of Atheism. These, then, are the kinds of answer which it seems desirable to give to the several points suggested.

4. "*Method of meeting the Causes.*—It will be observed that in these responses of the believer to the cries of unbelief an effort is made to pass through the form into the cause of antagonism. Here I add some general remarks on the method of meeting the six causes specified. In dealing with Pessimism it is worse than folly to speak as an optimist who looks only at sunny landscapes, shutting his eyes to the long stretches of dismal moor beyond. These must be recognised, but set in the light of a faith that believes against appearances because it has learned to endure as seeing the invisible. In meeting Rebellionism, the nature of Christian liberty, as far removed from licence as from bondage, must be displayed, and the en-

slaving tendency of self-indulgence, from which freedom flies, must be made manifest. Revolutionism ought to be answered by Reform; not by the denial, but by the sifting of the facts on which the spirit of revolution depends. In dealing with Rationalism, the dignity of reason ought to be acknowledged, while faith is proved not only to have a province of its own, but also to be the very foundation on which reason reposes. In the treatment of Experimentalism, the authority of experience must be gladly admitted, while calling attention to the fact that without something more, Science would be impossible, and that, on one side, Christianity is itself an experimental science. In approaching Unchristianism we come to a cause of another kind. Here the antagonism to Christ is to be found in the house, sometimes, alas! in the hearts of His friends. For there are those who are Christians in profession but not in character, tares among the wheat, that will not confess themselves tares. And there are others, Christians indeed, but dull in faith and cold in love. In dealing with the one there is nothing for it but unshrinking exposure; in dealing with the other, we can but appeal to their half-dormant love of Christ, by every motive that will touch a Christian's heart, and rouse the Christian's fear of doing his Master wrong. But we may in some measure lessen the harm, by constantly referring the unbeliever from the Christian to the Christian's Lord; from the Christianity of the Church to the Christianity of Christ, so far as the former is not the latter. Yet still, as has been truly said, only the saint is the perfect theist, and the holier our lives the less our atheism, until, in perfect union with God, it is cast out for ever."

The warning which I wish to add is this. It is not well to treat any class of non-believers as atheists, agnostics, etc., or generally as Anti-Christians. It is extremely desirable to make no mistake as to how far any case belongs to one or more of the classes given; but then we ought never, or, if there be an exception at all, very rarely, deal with so-called unbelievers in any other light than as Christians whose faith is darkened by difficulties. The overwhelming majority of them were baptized into the Catholic Church and, though not in the Catholic Faith

in its integrity, were yet, on the whole, brought up as Christians. Who can say that an agnostic, for example, has really ceased to be a Christian? Is it allowable to say that any baptized man absolutely ceases to be a Christian so long as he lives? Is there not still an actual organic relation between him and Christ which was not created by individual belief, and which individual unbelief, even when most pronounced, cannot destroy? But, besides apparently extreme cases, which are rarely really extreme, the greater part are either simply doubters, or they are deniers only on certain points. Even were they all pronounced opponents at all points, I should still maintain that they cannot de-Christianize themselves while they live; and should invariably treat their antagonism as founded on difficulties which seemed to them insuperable. If there be any reason to question their honesty, they ought to be treated like other Christians who have fallen into sin. And, of course, the same remark applies to cases of wilful misrepresentation, envy, jealousy, bitterness, malice, and all uncharitableness.

6. The Interest of Religion. (p. 70.)

Professor Huxley says: "True science and true religion are twin sisters, and the separation of either from the other is sure to prove the death of both. Science prospers exactly in proportion as it is religious, and religion flourishes in exact proportion to the scientific depth and firmness of its basis. The great deeds of philosophers have been less the fruit of their intellect than of the direction of that intellect by an eminently religious tone of mind. Truth has yielded itself rather to their patience, their love, their single-heartedness, and their self-denial, than to their logical acumen.

"So far from science being irreligious, as many think, it is the neglect of science that is irreligious—it is the refusal to study the surrounding creation that is irreligious."

Buckle says (see "Miscellaneous and Posthumous Works," Art. *Mill on Liberty*): "When the very signs of life are mute; when the last faint tie is severed, and there lies before us nought save the shell and husk of what we loved too well, then truly, if we believed the separation were final, how could we

stand up and live? . . . Then, when we have garnered up our hearts, and where our treasure is thieves break in and steal, methinks that in that moment of desolation, the best of us would succumb, but for the deep conviction, that all is not really over; that we have as yet only seen in part; and that something remains behind. Something behind; something which the eye of reason cannot discern, but on which the eye of affection is fixed. What is that, which, passing over us like a shadow, strains the aching vision as we gaze at it? Why is it that at these times our minds are thrown back on themselves, and, being so thrown, have a forecast of another and a higher state? If this be a delusion, it is one which the affections have themselves created, and we must believe that the purest and noblest elements of our nature conspire to deceive us. So surely as we lose what we love, so surely does hope mingle with grief."

Compare with Goethe ("Conversations with Eckermann and Sorel," vol. i., p. 161); "At the age of seventy-five, one must, of course, think sometimes of death. But the thought never gives me the least uneasiness, for I am fully convinced that our spirit is a being of a nature quite indestructible, and that its activity continues from eternity to eternity. It is like the sun, which seems to set only to our earthly eyes, but which in reality never sets, but shines on unceasingly."

In his "Future of Agnosticism" (*Fortnightly Review*, January, 1889) Mr. Frederic Harrison says:—"The profound instinct of all healthy spirits, recognises that a state of no religion, of deliberate acquiescence in negation, of non-interest on principle, in those dominant questions, is weak, unworthy, and even immoral. It is in vain that the man of science, and the man of affairs ask to be let alone, and to do their own work in their own way, to leave these ultimate problems to those whom they concern, or to those who care for them. The instinct of all good men and women tells that a man without a genuine religion, a man to whom the relation of man to the world, man to his fellow man, is a mere academic question, a question to be put aside—is a source of danger and corruption to his neighbours and the society in which he lives, that selfish-

ness, caprice and anti-social self-assertion, or equally anti-social indolence are his sure destiny and besetting weakness. The appeals and reproaches of the older creeds as to the folly and danger of stifling the eternal religious instincts, are as true and powerful now as ever, though every single dogma were shivered to dust."

In reference to School Boards ("*Critiques and Addresses*," ii., p. 51) Professor Huxley says :—"I must confess I have been no less seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, was to be kept up in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters without the use of the Bible. The pagan moralists lack life and colour, and even the noble Stoic, Marcus Antoninus, is too high and refined for an ordinary child.

"Take the Bible as a whole, make the severest deductions which fair criticism can dictate for shortcomings and positive errors ; eliminate, as a sensible lay-teacher would do if left to himself, all that is not necessary for children to occupy themselves with, and there still remains in this old literature a vast residuum of moral beauty and grandeur. And then consider the great historical fact that for three centuries this book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history ; that it has become the national epic of Britain, and is familiar to noble and simple from John O'Groat's House to Land's End, as Dante and Tasso were once to the Italians ; that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of a mere literary form ; and finally, that it forbids the veriest hind who never left his village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past stretching back to the farthest limits of the oldest nations in the world.

"By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized, and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval of two eternities, and earns the blessings or the curses of all times, according to its effort to do good and to hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work?"

Professor Francis A. Newman long since said :—"The claim of retaining a belief in God, while rejecting a personal God, I do not know how to treat with respect. . . . To deny personality to God denies that mind and morality are part of His essence, and denies everything that can distinguish God from blind force or blind fate. Such an application of the word 'God' is delusive and evasive. An atheist may thus profess to believe in God."

As stated in the text Mr. Spencer maintains that God cannot be *less* than Personal.

As to the worship of humanity, Mr. Goldwin Smith says :—"What is Humanity?" "Is it an abstraction? I must say I would rather worship a stone idol, which at least has real existence. Is it an aggregate? Then it includes the wicked. Is it an induction? Then it will be incomplete till the scene of history is closed. I believe that it is an ideal, and I declare that I fail to see how it differs from the ideal of the Christian."

Sir James Stephen :—"Humanity with a capital H (Mr. Harrison's God), is neither better nor worse fitted to be a god than the Unknowable with a capital U. They are as much alike as six and half-a dozen. Each is a barren abstraction to which any one can attach any meaning he likes—or rather, no meaning at all."

But that Sir James Stephen misapprehends Mr. Spencer's teaching is evident from the following passage. Speaking of Comte's veneration and gratitude to the Great Being (Humanity) Mr. Spencer says that, "veneration or gratitude to any being implies belief in the conscious action of that being; . . . gratitude cannot be entertained to something unconscious. But the Great Being Humanity has no corporate consciousness whatever. If the Great Being Humanity, who is the author of all these conquests of human progress, is unconscious, the emotions of veneration and gratitude are absolutely irrelevant." And if we understand Mr. Spencer rightly, he holds that since veneration and gratitude are surely due somewhere, they are due to that Ultimate Cause from which humanity, as a whole, in common with all other things, has proceeded. Thus the Ulti-

mate Cause cannot be less than Personal, must be conscious of the veneration and gratitude of which He is the Object.

The same conviction as to the not-less-than Personality of God is expressed in another way by Professor Tyndall:—"Often in the spring time, when looking with delight on the springing foliage, 'considering the lilies of the field,' and sharing the general joy of opening life, I have asked myself whether there is no power, being, or thing, in the universe whose knowledge of that of which I am so ignorant is greater than mine. I have said to myself, Can man's knowledge be the greatest knowledge—and man's life the highest life? My friends, the profession of Atheism, with which I am so lightly charged, would, in my case, be an impossible answer to the question."

As to evolution and design, Professor Huxley speaks as follows:—"Having got rid of the belief in chance, and the disbelief in design, as in no sense appurtenances of evolution, the third libel upon that doctrine, that it is anti-theistic, might perhaps be left to shift for itself. . . . Evolution is neither anti-theistic nor theistic. It simply has no more to do with theism than the first book of Euclid has. The doctrine of Evolution does not even come into contact with Theism, considered as a philosophical argument."

"There is a wider teleology, which is not touched by the doctrine of evolution, but is actually based upon the fundamental proposition of evolution. That proposition is that the whole world, living and not living, is the result of the mutual interaction, according to definite laws, of the forces possessed by the molecules of which the primitive nebulosity of the universe was composed. If this be true it is no less certain that the existing world lay potentially in the cosmic vapour, and that a sufficient intelligence could, from a knowledge of the properties of the molecules of that vapour have predicted, say, the state of the fauna of Britain in 1869, with as much certainty as one can say what will happen to the vapour of breath in a cold winter's day. . . . The teleological and mechanical views of nature are not necessarily mutually exclusive. On the contrary, the more purely a mechanist the speculator is, the

more firmly does he assume the primordial molecular arrangement of which all the phenomena of the universe are the consequences ; and the more completely he is thereby at the mercy of the teleologist, who can always defy him to prove, that this primordial molecular arrangement was not intended to evolve the phenomena of the universe."

Sir James Stephen :—"To deny that Christianity, in its various forms, has been, and still is, one of the greatest powers in the world, or to deny that its doctrines have, in fact, been associated in many ways with all that we commonly recognise as virtue, is like denying the agency of the sun in the physical world.

"If we think as Cæsar thought of God and a future state, the result will be the morals of Cæsar; though many persons in the present day seem to believe that they can reconcile the morals of Jesus and the theology of Julius Cæsar by masquerading in the world's old clothes, and asking the world at large to take their word that all is well."

The author of "Supernatural Religion," says of Christianity that whilst all previous systems had merely sought to purify the stream, it "demanded the purification of the fountain. It placed the evil thought on a par with the evil action. Such morality, based upon the intelligent and earnest acceptance of Divine law, and perfect recognition of the brotherhood of man, is the highest conceivable by humanity, and although its power and influence must augment with the increase of enlightenment, it is in itself beyond development, consisting as it does of principles unlimited in their range and inexhaustible in their application."

Max Müller :—"There is no religion in the whole world, which in purity, in simplicity of purpose, in charity and true humanity, comes near to that religion which Christ taught to His disciples."

The reader will find several of these quotations more fully given in the Rev. Nevison Loraine's "The Battle of Belief," together with, I think, references to all the sources from which they are taken.

7. Baptism and Belief. (p. 205.)

In the course of these lectures the *Christian Commonwealth*[1] raised the question of the relations of baptism and belief.

"Mr. Harrison, Vicar of Lightcliffe, in his current Boyle Lectures, at Bethnal Green parish church,[2] is dealing with some of the difficulties of the day in anything but a superficial manner. He has invented some expressive phrases. For instance, he defines 'Irreducible Christianity' as being the proposition that we ought to believe, trust, love, and obey Jesus Christ, for this proposition is involved in every form of Christianity. Some Agnostics are, says Mr. Harrison, sub-Christians. They are able, they think, to accept the Christianity of Christ as set forth by Himself, but they are not able to accept the Church of Christ, either as to its whole belief expressed in creeds, or as to some of its principles expressed in conduct. By sub-Christians the Boyle lecturer means those who cannot call themselves either Trinitarians or Unitarians, who love and obey Jesus Christ without being able to come to any conclusion about the Incarnation, or the sense in which He is divine. But just at this point Mr. Harrison makes a very singular admission. 'It is, I think,' says he, 'quite possible that many bodies would recognise as members Christians of this type. But as regards the Church of England, the question would have to be put into a different shape, at least in the case of the majority of Agnostics. Her assumption is that Englishmen are already in her fellowship'; yes, and this assumption presently involves the Boyle lecturer in a complication. Mr. Harrison endeavours to give a summary view of the doctrinal position of the Church of England, and he does it skilfully and lucidly, and yet with all this he cannot clear away the fog which will continually gather about the minds of people in regard to the Church of England. For instance, Mr. Harrison speaks of baptism as being administered before belief, but as being expected to lead to belief. And yet in this very lecture he cuts the ground

[1] July 13th, 1893.

[2] The lectures, as a matter of fact, were given in St. John's Church, Bethnal Green.

entirely from under his own feet by much elaborate reasoning about the necessity and obligation of belief. Why so, if baptism makes the baptized subject a Christian? If this be so, in what way can unbelief be regarded as fatal? So tortuous a system of religion as is here outlined is surely calculated to produce any amount of Agnosticism. Indeed, the wonder is not that there are so many but so few Agnostics when the public mind has to face such a set of theological conundrums. The way in which the Boyle lecturer here displays his ideas about baptism is very curious, and it is marvellous that any acute mind can be satisfied, as he seems to be, with such a muddle in the name of a religion."

The tone of the last few sentences rather surprised me, as it was not, I think, the usual tone of the *Christian Commonwealth*. But I am grateful to the writer for affording me the opportunity of stating more fully than was possible in the lecture my own views. I am, I suppose, what is called a High Churchman, yet I do not suppose for an instant that I should be recognised as a member of the High Church party. I think I am also an Evangelical, but I do not flatter myself that Low Churchmen would be willing to open their arms to me. I am further, I believe, a Broad Churchman, but I am tolerably certain that Broad Churchmen would not accept me as one of them. I am, moreover, a Presbyterian, a Congregationalist, a Baptist, a Methodist, a Unitarian, and an Agnostic ;[1] but none of these would say that I was entitled to speak on their behalf. Nevertheless, if men are to be characterized by their positive rather than by their negative views I could, I am persuaded, make good my claim. For he who keeps the Catholic Faith whole and undefiled must affirm with the Agnostic, the incomprehensibility of God ; with the Unitarian, the Divine Unity ; with the Methodist, the universality of Christ's sacrifice ; with the Baptist, the necessity of baptism ; with the Congregationalist, the rights of the congregation ; with the Presbyterian, the importance of Presbyters ; with the Broad Churchman, the transcendent obligations of

[1] If I did not wish to avoid language which gets its name from the supposed desire to trap claps, I might add "I am a man, and nothing that is human is without interest for me."

morality; with the Evangelical, the authority of the Bible; with the High Churchman, the authority of the Church. In like manner the Catholic must be, on their positive side, in sympathy at once with the freethinker and the bigot, non-conformity and conformity, the "progress" of the Higher Critic and the "conservatism" of the Traditionalist. For it is the *raison d'être* of Catholicism that it is faithful to the "whole council of God" and to the "Proportion of Faith."

As, however, no party would accept me as an exponent of its views, it will be understood that in what follows I can speak authoritatively only for myself. At the same time, nothing is put down here that does not seem to me to be, if not explicitly, then implicitly, given in the Catholic Faith. I hold then—

1. That all men are constitutionally Christians.
2. That the baptized are organically Christians.
3. That those who live in the Obedience of Faith are ethically Christians.
4. That the doctrine of the "Sacrament of Intention" covers the case of all those Ethical Christians who, without fault of their own, have not been formally baptized.

I can scarcely hope that those who have not closely studied the subject will be able at once to appreciate the points here raised. I will, therefore, try to put as clearly as I can before the reader some aspects of the question which appear to me essentially true.

1. *Constitutionally Christian.* Christianity includes theism, and so far as the question is theistic only, the difficulty of exposition is not great. Every man is, I think, conscious of God, even though he does not recognise God as God. In other word the intuition of God is a permanent element of consciou ness, though one may be in a sense unconscious of the fact. To some this will appear a contradiction in terms. But there are two kinds of consciousness. As I have said in my *Church in Relation to Sceptics*: "The one form is usually called consciousness, the other self-consciousness. I do not altogether like the latter, because of the possible mistaken implication that we are fully conscious of self at any given moment. Take the image of a circular lake and fancy in and around its

centre a disc of light. Suppose, further, that there are currents perpetually moving in such a way that while none of them is at any one time wholly in the disc of light, all of them in turn, whether singly or in twos and threes, pass into it at any point and out of it at another, either blending or crossing each other's track. Let us now call the lake self, the disc of light the self-observing consciousness, the currents the observed consciousness, the water itself, to its utmost depth, the mind. The illustration fails in the presumption that the disc of light cannot be attributed to the water, whereas the observing consciousness must be attributed to the mind. But when the defect of an illustration is remembered its danger passes away. Making, then, the necessary allowance, let us proceed. In one sense all consciousness is self-consciousness ; in the sense, that is, that it is self that is conscious. But inasmuch as that of which we are conscious is not always self, a distinction has to be made. You will understand, then, that this distinction is what is called objective ; *i.e.* it is based on what it is we are conscious of. There is, therefore, consciousness in general, including all the currents of our being and the forms in which those currents flow, call them what you will ; say, for the one, feeling, thought, will ; for the other (save as disturbed by sin or disease, whether emotional, intellectual, or volitional), beauty, truth, and right ; and there is also the self-observing consciousness by which we know what we are. Otherwise, a man might, indeed, feel, think, will, but he would never know that he felt, thought, or willed. I note your half smile and the murmured word "metaphysics." But, my brother, beware how you call an honest man a thief. All I have explained, you hold as much as I do. Every religious and moral distinction would disappear if you did not. You exhort men to repentance and to trust. But how are they to set about either, if they can never recognise themselves as repenting or trusting? I see the smile has vanished and the murmur ceased. You admit, then, the distinction.

"Now you would have no difficulty in imagining a pure, sweet, still, soft air covering the entire lake, luminous disc and circling currents, and even penetrating far beneath its surface. But we have a better figure than that. There is a something

so intangible and fine that (like space itself, if you admit as true the implied idea of space), it penetrates not only through the mass of the universe, but through every one of all the atoms of which the elements of the universe consist ; penetrates, that is, in all directions, not in lines, with untouched spaces between, but everywhere, in every part (if atoms have parts) of every atom ; not only penetrates, but permeates, and that in such a sense that there is not in all the space occupied by all the worlds, or in all the worlds themselves, inside or outside, so much as a mathematical point where it is not. By a bold figure it might be called the all-diffused physical soul of the physical universe. For impalpable and all-diffused as it is, it is still physical ; it falls short of pure spirit. Yet æther, for so this all-present physical something is named, serves better than air as a symbol of spirit. And I may say in passing, this will explain what you have often heard me say, that science is continually approaching nearer and nearer the spiritual. Now this æther permeates every molecule of the lake, and of all such lakes, and everything between, yet never in the smallest degree destroys their individuality ; nay, it might even be shown that, however unrecognised, their individuality, as well as their existence, depends upon its presence. Now, God, however unrecognised, is as truly present, as is the æther in the universe, in every man, permeating all the depths of his consciousness, all the depths of his being ; permeating all men besides, and all things that are, not only without destroying their individuality, but as that absolute being on which their individuality and existence alike depend. While, as we shall presently see, the whole object of moral scientific evidence is the recognition of responsible existences as they ought to be, the whole object of physical scientific evidence is the recognition of existences as they are ; the object of spiritual scientific evidence is the recognition of both. But in God, being as it ought to be, and being as it is, are one and the same. And as science is not science in its deepest sense until it recognises the dependence of all existences upon the Absolute Being, so scientific evidence is not scientific in its deepest sense unless, and so far as, its aim be man's recognition of the all-present

God. As God permeates at all points not only existence, but life and consciousness, whether recognised or not, the atheist or the agnostic, as truly as the theist, lives and moves and has his being in God. The difference is, the theist recognises God as God ; the atheist or agnostic does not. Yet he may, and, I think, always does, recognise Him as the Omnipresent Power. What, therefore, the object of our evidence must be is, to bring about, on his part, the recognition of God as God ; to make him feel, in every sensitive fibre of his being, that the truth, and right, and beauty, and love which he recognises as authoritative are revelations of the truth, and right, and beauty, and love of God."

All those who believe in the Blessed Trinity, and who believe that in God we live and move and have our being, will believe that we live, move, and have our being in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Then they who hold that there is a special sense in which the Son is the Creator, will not find it hard to hold that we are in special relation to the second Person of the Trinity, or that our constitutional sonship depends upon the Son.

It will not be so easy to see that every man lives, moves, and has his being in the Son as humanly God ; or, to avoid some profoundly mysterious questions, let us rather say, that the Son as humanly God is constitutionally present in every man. I may be permitted to quote from my "Church in Relation to Sceptics" the following passage, p. 55 :—

"There is a Christ-implanted ideal of the God-man in every human mind, by comparison with which he is able to recognise the Christ of the Bible and of the Church. And the object of Christian evidence is first to enable the unbeliever to recognise that ideal, and, then, to interpret each in the light of the other. When I say an ideal of the God-man is Christ implanted, I mean that Christ Himself is so present in the depths of the human consciousness that a man is able to judge whether the characteristics and deeds of the Christ of the gospels and of the Church are such as can be rightly attributed to the living Christ he knows. In other words, the eternal Son of God in becoming man and, possibly, before His manifestation in the

flesh, became humanly Divine that we might become Divinely human, and as humanly Divine inhabits the depths of every human consciousness. 'Christ in you' is thus essentially true of every man, though only he who recognises and obeys Christ can add 'the hope of glory.'

"We have already seen that beneath the currents that pass through the luminous disc of self-observation, there are unfathomed depths. It is a fact known of all men that these depths, where Christ dwells, are not directly, in their contents or their movements, under control; and as they are, under ordinary conditions, inscrutable, men cannot recognise, by any self-observation, the presence of Christ therein. But when repentance stirs the consciousness to its depths, when the hunger and thirst after righteousness depresses all lower desires, the Christ within is revealed; and the purified heart discovers that it does see God. We owe to the Christ without the recognition of the Christ within, and we owe to the Christ within, the interpretation of the Christ without."

2. *Organically Christian.* So far the subject has been considered as a part of those abiding relations of the soul to God which underlie and run through all the specialities of "ages" or "dispensations." We have to bear in mind, however, that Christianity is an historical as well as a spiritual religion. The Lord Jesus Christ founded on the earth a Divine society called the Church; and He Himself established baptism as the mode of entrance into that society. His commission to His apostles ran thus: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." I cannot go at length into the question of infant baptism. It is, I think, clear that, in the case of adults, belief as assent given after ull examination was not required in order to baptism, for there was much that could not be learned till afterwards. But it is equally clear that such belief as involved the overcoming of unwillingness to be a disciple was required. And one can see why this must be in every case where, as in adults, evil tendency had become

a developed element of character. But in the case of babes there is no such opposition to be overcome, and to take them into the heart of the Church, which, for its structure and life, depends upon the Holy Ghost, is to take them into a great organism in which they share the common life, and thus are "regenerate," in which the evil tendency need never become a developed element of character, in which they may grow up into the fulness of the stature of Christ. This is what I mean by being organically Christian.

3. *Ethically Christian.* To thus believe in Baptismal Regeneration is not to affirm that every one who is baptized will grow up ethically Christian, or that without ethical Christianity he can be finally saved. The fact that a man is born an Englishman, that he shares the common English life, that he is placed in circumstances favourable to the growth of all the virtues of a high-toned English citizen, is not a guarantee that he will not dishonour his birth, defile his life, defy his circumstances, and disown his citizenship. Those who believe at all in freedom of choice must see how possible it is for one to choose the way of evil, notwithstanding the good in which he has been brought up, and he who does this without return must perish. Organic Christianity that is also ethical, has the savour of life unto life; organic Christianity that is not also ethical, has the savour of death unto death.

I do not wish to more than touch upon the doctrine of final perseverance. It involves questions the most profound and the most difficult with which the human mind can deal. To say, however, that the great body of Christians will be finally saved is not to say that every one of them will be saved. God has guaranteed His Church from all possibility of wreck by invisible rocks or overwhelming winds; but He has not, I think, given any guarantee that no one will jump overboard. The Church cannot be wrecked, but an individual Christian may wreck himself.

4. *The Sacrament of Intention.* The idea is, I think, that wherever one is disabled by no fault of his own from participating formally in a sacrament, and he at the same time, with a pure heart, wills to participate, and to be and to do all

that the sacrament implies, then he does virtually participate as if he had been bodily present. The same principle applies to the cases of all those who assuredly would will in like manner had they known Christ ; and to those in Christian lands who, strange as it may seem, find it impossible to believe that our Lord instituted sacraments at all. As to those who from sheer thoughtlessness, carelessness, or perversity neglect what our Lord commanded, I say nothing ; but no man can be ethically Christian without being virtually baptized where this alone is possible, or being formally baptized also where this was within his reach.

Let us put the question : Are we to believe because we are Christians or in order to become Christians? There is, I fear, some danger of making a fetich of belief. Its importance, when the grounds and nature of the importance are rightly understood, can scarcely be exaggerated, but it is easy and common to mistake both. There are two cases to be considered.

1. In the case of the already baptized we are to believe, not that we may be saved, but because we ought ; the duty of faith, like that of love, grows out of the relation already formally established between Christ and ourselves. To say that no one can be saved until he has, as a conscious and deliberate action, "believed" in Christ, is to substitute belief for Christ as the saviour of souls. It must be remembered that the area of consciousness occupied by belief, recognised as such, is comparatively small ; that in the depths beneath and around dwells the Holy Spirit ; and that the direction of belief towards the Lord Jesus Christ is the result of the Holy Spirit's influence. As I have said, when the infant is taken into the heart of the Church, whose life is the life of God as human, there is no resistance on the infant's part ; and before any question of conscious belief can arise it is already Christian. Henceforth the problem of righteousness is the problem of adjustment to the Christ in whom the child is, and belief is unquestionably a necessary element in that adjustment. So understood its importance can hardly be overrated. And it is undoubtedly true that even in the case of babes, belief must precede baptism ; but it is the belief of

the Church into which the babe is received, not the conscious creed of the child, which is necessary.

2. In the case of all those who have reached the age of moral responsibility before being baptized, while baptism is equally necessary, the prominence of belief is, from the nature of the case, much greater. For here there is resistance to be overcome, resistance not only of evil tendency but, also, in varying degrees, of evil habit. Even here, however, belief ought to be presented rather as an obligation than as an advantage ; as something *due* to God, to Christ, to the Holy Spirit rather than as a benefit to the believer. There is no question of its necessity to salvation ; but the salvation to which it is necessary is salvation from sin to holiness, that is, to unselfish devotion to God as the Absolutely Good. And experience shows that if the nature and obligation of belief are not rightly understood a man may easily imagine that, when he has believed, he has done all that is necessary, whereas belief is but one element in what we owe to God. It is doubtful if any man can be, it is certain that no man ought to seek to be, saved alone. To be saved one must be in the saved body, and baptism is the entrance therein. In baby-hood, as in years of discretion, belief precedes baptism ; in both belief is necessary to baptism, and in both the belief which is necessary is the belief of the Church—the Body of Christ, of which we are made members, and whose inheritance we share. The body is the Kingdom of God ; the inheritance is everlasting life ; the belief is the faith of the Church ; in which, in the one case we willingly grow up ; in which, in the other case, moved thereto by the Holy Ghost, we voluntarily participate. The formal baptism becomes formally complete in confirmation, followed by Holy Communion, wherein the union of the consentient will with the will of God renders it possible to receive all the perfect gifts of grace.

8. Buddhism. (p. 224.)

The claims of Buddhism to be set up as a rival to Christianity will not much affect those who recognise the relation of the Eternal Son to the world as the one source of human good every-

where. One might as well set up Moses as Gautama in rivalry to Christ. No one thinks of doing that; why then do they think of doing this? The fact is Moses and Gautama were prophets sent by Him who became incarnate as the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be very extraordinary if they had not, being His messengers, taught beforehand a good deal that He, when come in the flesh, gave in a more perfect form. If we are not astonished at Moses, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," why should we be surprised at Gautama's "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself!" The Bible tells us that there have been prophets since the world began, but the Bible does not say—it rather implies the contrary—that they were confined to Bible lands. They do not honour Christ who deny that Gautama and Confucius and Socrates and many a gifted soul besides were His servants.

From the standpoint of the present writer, it did not seem necessary to go into the questions raised by the consideration of Buddhism. It not unlikely that its influence will be yet more widely felt in the West, but it seems to him that the ultimate result will be to give us all a clearer apprehension and a profounder appreciation of Christianity. Meanwhile what we most need is trustworthy information as to what Buddhism really is. One of our best known writers on the subject is, of course, Professor Rhys Davids, and Professor Huxley in his notes to his Romanes lecture "Evolution and Ethics," gives, from that author, some valuable quotations which I reproduce here :—

"There is within the body of every man a soul which, at the death of the body, flies away from it like a bird out of a cage, and enters upon a new life . . . either in one of the heavens or one of the hells or on this earth. The only exception is the rare case of a man having in this life acquired a true knowledge of God. According to the pre-Buddhistic theory the soul of such a man goes along the paths of the gods to God, and, being united with Him, enters upon an immortal life in which his individuality is not extinguished. In the later theory, his soul is directly absorbed into the Great Soul, is lost in it and has no longer any independent existence. The souls of all other men enter, after the death of the body, upon a new existence

in one or other of the many different modes of being. If in heaven or hell the soul itself becomes a god or demon without entering a body; all superhuman beings, save the great gods being looked upon as not eternal, but merely temporary creatures. If the soul returns to earth it may or may not enter a new body; and this either of a human being, an animal, a plant, or even a material object. For all these are possessed of souls, and there is no essential difference between these souls and the souls of men—all being alike mere sparks of the Great Spirit, who is the only real existence" (Rhys Davids, "Hibbert Lectures," 1881, p. 83).

"One of the latest speculations now being put forward among ourselves would seek to explain each man's character, and even his outward condition in life by the character he inherited from his ancestors, a character gradually formed during a practically endless series of past existences, modified only by the conditions into which he was born, those very conditions being also, in like manner, the last result of a practically endless series of past causes. Gautama's speculation might be stated in the same words. But it attempted also to explain, in a way different from that which would be adopted by the exponents of the modern theory, that strange problem which it is also the motive of the wonderful drama of the book of Job to explain—the fact that the actual distribution here of good fortune, or misery, is entirely independent of the moral qualities which men call good or bad. We cannot wonder that a teacher, whose whole system was so essentially an ethical reformation, should have felt it incumbent upon him to seek an explanation of this apparent injustice. And all the more so, since the belief he had inherited, the theory of the transmigration of souls, had provided a solution perfectly sufficient to any one who could accept that belief" ("Hibbert Lectures," p. 93). To the above Professor Huxley appends the following remark: "I should venture to suggest the substitution of 'largely' for 'entirely' in the foregoing passage. Whether a ship makes a good or a bad voyage is largely independent of the conduct of the captain, but it is as largely affected by that conduct. Though powerless before a hurricane he may weather many a bad gale."

"The outward condition of the soul is, in each new birth, determined by its actions in a previous birth; but by each action in succession and not by the balance struck after the evil has been reckoned off against the good. A good man, who has once uttered a slander, may spend a hundred thousand years as a god, in consequence of his goodness, and, when the power of his good actions is exhausted, may be born as a dumb man on account of his transgression; and a robber who has once done an act of mercy, may come to life in a king's body as the result of his virtue, and then suffer torments for ages in hell or as a ghost without a body, or be re-born many times as a slave or an outcast, in consequence of his evil life.

"There is no escape according to this theory from the result of any act; though it is only the consequences of its own acts that each soul has to endure. The force has been set in motion by itself and can never stop; and its effect can never be foretold. If evil, it can never be modified or prevented, for it depends on a cause already completed, that is now for ever beyond the soul's control. There is even no continuing consciousness, no memory of the past that could guide the soul to any knowledge of its fate. The only advantage open to it is to add in this life to the sum of its good actions, that it may bear fruit with the rest. And even this can only happen in some future life under essentially the same conditions as the present one; subject, like the present one, to old age, decay, and death; and affording opportunity, like the present one, for the commission of errors, ignorances, or sins, which, in their turn, must inevitably produce their due effect of sickness, disability, or woe. Thus is the soul tossed about from life to life, from billow to billow in the great ocean of transmigration. And there is no escape save for the very few who, during their birth as men, attain to a right knowledge of the Great Spirit: and thus enter into immortality, or, as the later philosophers taught, are absorbed into the Divine Essence" (Rhys Davids, "Hibbert Lectures," pp. 85, 86).

Professor Huxley adds: "The state after death, thus imagined by the Hindu philosophers, has a certain analogy to the purgatory of the Roman Church; except that escape from it

is dependent not on a divine degree modified, it may be, by sacerdotal or saintly intercession, but by the acts of the individual himself; and that while ultimate emergence into heavenly bliss of the good or well-prayed for Catholic is professedly assured, the chances in favour of the attainment of absorption, or of Nirvana, by any individual Hindu are extremely small."

Professor Huxley has another significant note which runs as follows :—

"According to Buddhism, the relation of one life to the next is merely that borne by the flame of one lamp to the flame of another lamp which is set alight by it. To the 'Arahat' or adept 'no outward form, no compound thing, no creature, no creator, no existence of any kind, must appear to be other than a temporary collocation of its component parts fated inevitably to be dissolved'" (Rhys Davids, "Hibbert Lectures," p. 211).

"The self is nothing but a group of phenomena held together by the desire of life ; when that desire shall have ceased 'the Karma of that particular chain of lives will cease to influence any longer any distinct individual, and there will be no more birth ; for birth, decay, and death, grief, lamentation, and despair will have come, so far as regards that chain of lives, for ever to an end.'

"The state of mind of the Arahat in which the desire of life has ceased is Nirvana. Dr. Oldenberg has very acutely and patiently considered the various interpretations which have been attached to "Nirvana." . . . The result of his and other discussions of the question may, I think, be briefly stated thus :

"1. Logical deduction from the predicates attached to the term 'Nirvana' strips it of all reality, conceivability, or perceivability, whether by gods or men. For all practical purposes, therefore, it comes to exactly the same thing as annihilation.

"2. But it is not annihilation in the ordinary sense, inasmuch as it could take place in the living Arahat or Buddha.

"3. And, since, for the faithful Buddhist, that which was abolished in the Arahat was the possibility of further pain, sorrow, or sin ; and that which was attained was perfect peace ;

his mind directed itself exclusively to this joyful consummation, and personified the negation of all conceivable existence and of all pain into a positive bliss. This was all the more easy, as Gautama refused to give any dogmatic definition of Nirvana."

The last note on the subject is no less suggestive:

"The influence of the picture of the personal qualities of Gautama, afforded by the legendary anecdotes which rapidly grew into a biography of the Buddha and by the birth stories, which coalesced with the current folk-lore, and were intelligible to all the world, doubtless played a large part. Further, although Gautama appears not to have meddled with the caste system, he refused to recognise any distinction, save that of perfection in the way of salvation, among his followers; and, by such teaching, no less than by the inculcation of love and benevolence to all sentient beings, he practically levelled every social, political, and racial barrier. A third important condition was the organization of the Buddhists into monastic communities for the stricter professors, while the laity were permitted a wide indulgence in practice and were allowed to hope for accommodation in some of the temporary abodes of bliss. With a few hundred thousand years of immediate paradise in sight, the average man could be content to shut his eyes to what might follow."

9. Influence of the East on the West. (p. 224.)

The contrast of the highest good presented by Christianity and that presented by ancient philosophies will occur to the careful student on reading the following remark by Professor Huxley on the influence of the East on Greek thought:

"Thus various external influences may have contributed to the rise of philosophy among the Ionian Greeks of the sixth century. But the assimilative capacity of the Greek mind—its power of Hellenizing whatever it touched—has here worked so effectually, that so far as I can learn, no indubitable traces of such extraneous contributions are now allowed to exist by the most authoritative historians of philosophy. Nevertheless, I think it must be admitted that the coincidences between the Heracleito-stoical doctrines and those of the older Hindu

philosophy are extremely remarkable. In both, the cosmos pursues an eternal succession of cyclical changes. The great year, answering to the Kalpa, covers an entire cycle from the origin of the universe as a fluid, to its dissolution in fire—'Humor initium, ignis exitus mundi,' as Seneca has it. In both systems, there is immanent in the cosmos a source of energy, Brahma, or the Logos, which works according to fixed laws. The individual soul is an efflux of this world-spirit and returns to it. Perfection is attainable only by individual effort, through ascetic discipline, and is rather a state of painlessness than of happiness; if, indeed, it can be said to be a state of anything, save the negation of perturbing emotion. The hatchment motto 'In Cœlo Quies' would serve both Hindu and Stoic; and absolute quiet is not easily distinguishable from annihilation.

"Zoroasterism, which, geographically, occupies a position intermediate between Hellenism and Hinduism, agrees with the latter in recognising the essential evil of the cosmos; but differs from both in its intensely anthropomorphic personification of the two antagonistic principles, to the one of which it ascribes all the good; and, to the other, all the evil. In fact, it assumes the existence of two worlds, one good and one bad; the latter created by the evil power for the purpose of damaging the former. The existing cosmos is a mere mixture of the two and the 'last judgment' is a root and branch extirpation of the work of Ahriman."

10. Theosophy. (p. 224.)

Though Madame Blavatsky was, and Mrs. Besant is, more or less hostile to Christianity, I see no reason why Christians should return the compliment. The rules of the Theosophical Society do not require from any candidate for admission that he should abjure his faith; and, I suppose, all the principles held admit of a Christian construction. Nevertheless, the fact remains, that, for whatever reason, the majority of Theosophists construe their Theosophy either in the sense of opposition or of superiority. For my part, I see nothing of value in it, as a religion, that I do not already possess, though I think it empha-

sizes some points that contemporary Christianity does not sufficiently recognise. But Theosophy can scarcely claim to be a religion. It is rather a philosophy of a very marked and peculiar sort, and I do not know why those who have adequate leisure, patience, and capacity for self-denial should not investigate and test its principles, methods, and results if they have any reasonable ground for expecting their labours to be rewarded. I hope, on the other hand, that those Theosophists who are not Christians will be induced to make themselves acquainted with at least the elements of the Catholic Faith; and that those Theosophists who *are* Christians will take the trouble to spread a little knowledge of Christianity among their brethren who, to judge from theosophical productions, do not know much about it. In one thing, at least, we might work together, for we are both opposed to that kind of materialism which does not recognise spirit.

11. Authenticity. (p. 225.)

Students would do well, and writers would do better, to put this word on one side. Experience shows that most men mix it up in a bad way with the question of authorship. Here is an old manuscript. There are certain things I want to know about it. 1. How far and in what sense are the statements it makes true? 2. In what way and to what extent do the questions of its authorship and date affect the judgment I ought to form as to its truth? Answer those two questions and do not worry about "authenticity."

12. Genuineness. (p. 225.)

Observe, first, that a document may be a forgery and yet true in substance. Go back for a moment to the word "authenticity," and note especially the second of the two questions given under that head. Be careful not to confound forgery of title with falsehood of contents. Of course a forged document may be false throughout; but, also, it may not. Suppose I wrote a false account of the reign of James I., and pretended that I had found it among the papers of Lord Macaulay. That would be a forgery, where both title and contents lied. Now, suppose I

had written a true account of that reign and pretended I had found it among Lord Macaulay's papers. That would still be a forgery, though its contents, save the title, were true.

Observe, now, a document might be genuine and yet false in its contents. Imagine a case. A writer of the second century whom we will call Polyander writes a false account of the Church of his time, and there is no question whatever that the document we possess is an accurate copy of the MS. written by him. Here the document is not what is called a forgery; it was really written by Polyander, it is genuine, and yet it is a tissue of falsehoods.

Note next, a document may be not only true but also genuine, though it turn out to have been written by some one else than its supposed author. Again imagine a case. A writer of the first century pens an accurate account of the origin of Christianity. He wants to call attention to facts, not to himself. He, therefore, does not give his name. Soon after, the authorship of this anonymous work becomes the subject of much conjecture. Ultimately, the balance of opinion inclines to one name, and successive generations accept this without question. In our own time an acute scholar detects certain characteristics that render it doubtful whether the supposed author could have really written it. The attention of scholars generally is called to the subject and the earlier opinion is abandoned. But all this does not affect either the truth or the genuineness of the MS.

Genuineness, like authenticity, is so likely to be misused that it is in fact better not used at all. If the second of the two questions given under "authenticity" be answered rightly, you can do without "genuineness."

13. Spuriousness. (p. 225.)

See authenticity and genuineness. After what has been already said under the above, it seems scarcely needful to point out that a document might be spurious, *e.g.*, falsely attributed by the writer himself, or by others, to a given author, and yet be in other respects true in substance and in fact.

14. Mr. Spencer as a Theologian. (p. 228.)

I often wish that Mr. Spencer could have found in his great plan a crowning place for the *Principles of Theology*. No one, perhaps, could so well as he have brought up into plain sight the profound truth that science which does not see God looks the wrong way. As, however, Mr. Spencer has not, as far as I can judge, willed to give the world a distinct work on Theology, and as he has, at the same time, shown with noon-like clearness how possible it is to convert, with only such change as his own principles justify, his whole system into a system of Theology, there opens out to any man fit for the work a splendid opportunity of service alike to religion and science. The present writer is not qualified for such an undertaking. His hope is that some young author of genius, power, and patience, may be led to make the work his own, and with unwearying industry, rivalling therein, if possible, Mr. Spencer himself, transfigure the synthetic Philosophy into a system of Theology which the world will not willingly let die.

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(*The object of this index is to facilitate the finding of points to which the author attaches special importance.*)

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